French Engravings of the
Eighteenth Century

Lancret —— Vincent

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No. 80

French Engravings
of the Eighteenth Century
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NICOLAS LANCRET

(1690-1743)

THE unceremonious critic, who described Pater as Watteau's second monkey, designated Lancret as his first ape. Without resorting to simian similes and calling in question the amorous fairyland of Watteau, the merit should be granted to his immediate follower of having brilliantly depicted the light aspect of society while the Regent led the reaction from the austerity of the latter part of Louis XIV's reign.

More ingenious than imaginative in his compositions, Lancret was endowed with a large share of that elegance of which the eighteenth century has held and borne away the wondrous secret. The poetical musings of Watteau were beyond his psychology,[1] but the graceful unrestraint of his figures was borrowed freely from his model, whose style impressed him to such an extent, that, as a beginner, he sought to obtain the same tuition from the same master, Gillot. A story that Watteau took offence at the compliments paid him, as if he had painted two among the early pictures of his imitator, is hardly credible. No connoisseur could mistake his Veneto-Flemish touch, another undisputed claim to supremacy; for Lancret's comparatively hard though clever technique was due to an engraver's early training.

Gersaint tells a more reliable anecdote: on leaving Gillot, Lancret applied for guidance to Watteau who urged him once and for all to shape his paintings upon nature. As he professed thereafter never to have departed from that rule, a contemporary fault-finder remarked that the obliging nature hired by him as a sitter was a mingling of traditional attributes and new-fashioned disguises; the sort of compromise to be expected of so assiduous an opera-goer as Lancret was known to be, and the best apology for a twinkling, artificial colouring. But allowances should be made on this score. However determined may have been the subjects of Louis XV to shame the devil by being human and merry, the old ways could not be at once discarded and, before reverting to the genuine article, painters were bound to linger awhile within a trimmed and dressy kind of out-of-doors stage scenery. And yet Lancret never lost himself in symbols: his panels of the

four elements for Pompadour's country residence at Jouy represented "fire" with a dance of youngsters round a burning faggot, "water" with a lady emerging from her bath, "earth" with two loving couples playing at gardening, "air" with a girl trusting her satin gown to the indiscretions of the wind, as she sat on a swing, to which thenceforth all the *escarpolettes* of the French school were traced. With this superficial regeneration of trite themes developed into decorative sets, Lancret never erred on the prosaic side, and while dealing with frivolity, never encroached on the commonplace or the indelicate.

In 1719 he was made a member of the Academy as painter of *fêtes galantes*. Their number is legion: at Berlin and Potsdam alone there are twenty-six of them. Bocher describes eighty-seven of his engraved works.

Acquisitiveness was not one of Lancret's faculties. To a dealer who offered him a substantial price if he would only retouch an old Italian portrait in order to give it a more saleable appearance, he replied: "I would sooner paint a bad "picture of my own, rather than run the risk of spoiling a good one."

[1] In the words of Sir Claude Phillips: "Lancret's joy is superficial, without shadow, without vibration; "that of Watteau is overshadowed with melancholy; deeper, more intermittent, never wholly free from "misgiving."

228-231.

LES QUATRE ÂGES DE LA VIE

A set of four engraved by Nicolas de Larmessin in 1735

Only states of the first three, first state of the fourth.
Bocher, Nos. 28, 1, 45, 86.

WHY try to liken the character and purport of pictures which do not belong to the same period? When Bourcard says that prints after Lancret lack personality and are not in tune with the spruce compositions of the later part of the century he forgets that, however marked may have been the emancipation of French society at the death of Louis XIV, the straight-laced traditions of his court could not have been at once discarded, and that art before finding truth and discovering naturalness was bound to linger within an overdressed nature ranging from arcadian shrubberies to pompous drawing-rooms. In that respect the engraved works of Lancret, more so than those of Watteau, hold the most vitally real representation of French life under the Regent and through the early part of Louis XV's reign. What may be lacking in wit, mental reservations, or wealth of decoration is amply compensated by their story-telling power. They compare with the so-called "gallantries" of Baudouin and Lavreince as the unpretentious living rooms of the spacious residences of well-to-do people before 1740, compared with the boudoirs, bachelor quarters, and "small apartments" which became the suggestive feature of town houses a few years later.

Each scene illustrating one of the four ages of life is commented upon by the quatrains then in vogue, wherein a mild poet would dilute philosophy with sentiment. Of Childhood we are told that were its amusements more artful they would be less enjoyable; of Adolescence that as soon as reason enlightens man, vanity lays hold of him; of Youth that all its sports are but a pretext to swagger before one's lady-love; of Old age that the excitement of being still alive is some compensation for bygone pleasures.

The first three prints have only one state, fully lettered; the fourth passed through a second state, when de Larmessin's address was replaced by that of Gaillard.

D'Argenville in his "Abridged lives of the best Painters" quotes the set among Lancret's most representative works. The four original pictures were bequeathed by Colonel Ollney to the National Gallery in 1837. The same set was reproduced with German legends by J. Geo. Merz, an engraver of Augsbourg.

232-235.

LES QUATRE HEURES DU JOUR

A set of four engraved by NICOLAS DE LARMESSIN in 1741

First states.
Bocher, Nos. 49, 50, 10, and 74.

AMONG the presentations made by members of the Academy to the great collection of engravings formed by that body during the course of the eighteenth century, it is on record that de Larmessin offered proofs of his "Four hours of the day" after Lancret. The quadruple set, conceived in the same spirit as the "Four ages of life" (Nos. 228-231) but making ampler concessions to the frivolities of society, marks another stage in the development of those fashionable interior scenes, which some forty years later were to attain the highest point of perfection through Moreau le Jeune.

The official description of a miniature of "Morning" by Lancret, set on the lid of a *vernis* Martin snuff-box in the Lenoir collection at the Louvre, states that the "maid smiles." The rhyme inserted under the print explains that the lady's earliest occupation—that of taking coffee with a friend—must soon give way to the cares of beautifying herself. At "Noon"—the day's measure—Cupid grasping the style of a sundial warns the fair ones that he holds sway over all hours. In the "Afternoon"—a miniature of which is set as a counterpart to "Morning" on the same box at the Louvre—the poet remarks that if at backgammon witnesses are welcome to settle a dispute, there are contests between sweethearts when a third person is but an intruder. Finally, in the "Evening," where, favoured by the oddest of moons, five ladies disport themselves in the cool moving crystal of a pond, the usual quatrain asks whether it be possible for a woman ever to consider her beauty without thinking of the beloved one.

With the exception of the first, of which only one state is known, the other three prints passed through a second state, when Crepy's address was added to that of de Larmessin. Bourcard, who quotes forty engravings after Lancret, picks out this set and "Four ages of life" as being sought after by collectors.

C. G. Kilian of Augsbourg reproduced a reversed replica of the "Hours" in mezzotint, printed in blue, with German legends.

MADEMOISELLE SALLÉ

By N. de Larmessin. After N. Lancret

236.

MADEMOISELLE SALLÉ

Engraved by Nicolas de Larmessin in 1732

First state.
Bocher, No. 71.

THE obituary eulogy of Lancret by Ballot de Sovot refers to this portrait of Sallé "setting her exquisite steps to a tune played by four small musicians, "within an enchanting scenery," as the most attractive of many theatrical souvenirs scattered by the painter about his works. As for the *danseuse* represented, a notice on Mlle. Camargo inserted in the "Necrology of famous Frenchmen" (1770) contains the following passage: "Our century, which was to be that of "dancing, an accomplishment heretofore sadly ignored, gave to Camargo a "dangerous rival in the person of Mlle. Sallé, to whom she had to yield the "prerogatives of tender and modest graces: although dancing as an art offered a "sufficiently wide field for the fame of both ballerine. In a well-known madrigal, "Voltaire summed up their respective styles and defined the 'bounds' of their "glory: 'How brilliant you are, Camargo, but, my word, how lovely is Sallé—how "'light your capers, how sweet her steps—she is unmatched, you are ever new. "'The Nymphs gambol as you do: the Graces glide as she does.'"

Besides expatiating on the harmony and litheness of her rhythmic movements, the gossipy memoirs of the time of Louis XV dwell so emphatically on the unaffected simplicity, the naïve expression and reserve of this votary of Terpsichore, that she appears to have been held as the pillar of virtue of a frisky profession. Diana's temple on the background of Lancret's picture was not without its meaning. Again Voltaire had said of her: "The mistress of all hearts as well as of her own, "she lights fires that are unknown to her: thus a high priestess of Diana dances "under Venus's features."

Having come over to London in 1730 with letters of introduction from Voltaire to the Duchess of Queensberry and Lord Bolingbroke, Mlle. Sallé made her first appearance at the Queen's Theatre, meeting with almost as great a success as in Paris: "She carries virtuosity to that pitch of perfection where effort disappears "and the most difficult pirouettes are but grace and charm. Her steps are no longer "earthly, a subtle agility spiritualizes the feminine form." Thence the demand in England for her engraved portrait, the second state of which, besides the Virgilian

quotation in Latin, "By her gait the Goddess stood revealed," had six lines in French, six in English. The first in unassuming strain laid stress on modesty as adding beauty to the fair sex: the second more ambitiously ran thus:

I know her now, the Sylvan Goddess cries,
Oeneus saw her once in such disguise.
Delusion vain: her grace, her easy mien
Her ev'ry *step dixloses* Beauty's Queen.
But soon the laughing Nymphs the fraud confess'd,
For they to grace her feast, had Sallé dress'd.

In France the print attained such popularity that some counterfeits of it having appeared on the market, the King's Privy Council ordered their confiscation, and fined the publisher for the benefit of Lancret and de Larmessin.

Among a few standard specimens of the French school of engraving permanently framed at the Bibliothèque Nationale, is an impression of "Mlle. Sallé." A woodcut of it has been inserted in Lacroix's "Institutions, Manners and Customs of the eighteenth century," and a small aquafortis reproduction illustrated the catalogue of the Pereire sale in 1872, when the original picture, which had once belonged to the husband of Mme. Vigée Lebrun, was bought by Mr. Marcille, to be sold again in 1876 for 6,200 francs.

The issue of the print had been advertised by the "Mercure" with due reference to the rivalry of the leading stars of the ballet, Camargo and Sallé, "both "deserving the same immortality." For the occasion the editor quoted yet another madrigal. To perpetuate the image of the *danseuse* the painter had consulted a poet who replied: "If your brushes are incapable of portraying her many charms, how "can I be expected to sing of her many virtues?" In France a sauce of words and rhymes is often better than the fish.

NICOLAS LAVREINCE

(1737-1807)

THE graceful art of this gallicized Swede belonged to the class favoured by Parisian financiers and their lady friends before the Revolution. Within groves redolent of Trianon, in the drawing and dressing-rooms of high life, in attires that were perfect patterns of fashion, love-making or its substitute was his favourite theme; a sort of love better trained to save appearances than had been the case with Baudouin, but without the harmonious touch, the spirited dash of the son-in-law of Boucher. The water-colours of Lavreince smoothed with *gouache*, somewhat laboured and overfinished, colder than on the corresponding prints, might serve to illustrate the gossipy memoirs of the time of Louis XVI; their interpretations with the point and the burin have overrun the originals to such an extent, that the artist of whose personality very little is known in France, though he sojourned there a score of years, is chiefly indebted for his second life to the alluring facsimiles of Janinet, the glistening plates of de Launay and Dequevauviller. His very name, Lafrensen, misspelt in ten different ways, was written correctly only once on a print, and amateurs adopted the orthography of Lavreince from the Frenchified signature more frequently met with on his pictures.[1]

The son of a portrait painter, he had perfected himself as a miniaturist in Paris together with three compatriots, Roslin, Hall, and Pilo. On returning home he was made a member of the Swedish Academy, but his training had spoilt him for the North; he hankered after France, and having gone back there in 1773, he never moved again till the Revolution. As the "Heureux moment," which strikes the distinctive note of the artist's style, was engraved by de Launay as early as 1777, the assimilation to his adopted country must have been completely achieved soon after his expatriation. Indeed, it would be difficult to surmise that the author of "la Consolation de l'absence, le Roman dangereux, qu'en dit l'Abbé" hailed from the latitude of Stockholm. Not only did he catch the frivolous bent of a society which gave no heed to the morrow, but he staged its modish marionettes in exquisite interiors of his own faultless composition, roomier and loftier than the boudoirs of the preceding reign, within classical lines that seem almost too stately

for the easy courtships of an Olympus in distemper. If, apart from his pictures, the foreign *gouacheur* who presumed to claim the succession of Baudouin was a stranger to most Frenchmen, even his own countrymen hardly realized that France owed to Sweden one of her most fashionable little masters. The annals of the time do not mention him; to reconstitute the chronology of his works we have only the monotonous advertisements of the "Mercure" and "Journal," bestowing upon every issue of a print after him the hackneyed adjectives of agreeable or amiable. Although one of his fellow countrymen, writing home about the success of Lafrensen, made much of his retiring habits and steady disposition, the subjects to which he went by preference seem to belie that isolated testimonial. The most select French house parties, the consultations in a lady's dressing-room as mirrored in the two "Assemblées" and "qu'en dit l'Abbé" (Nos. 239, 240, 244), the flirtations, advances, and heartaches depicted in the "Billet doux, la Consolation "de l'absence, l'Heureux moment, le Repentir" (Nos. 243, 248, 254, 261) are characteristic of an artist who neither gathered information from mere hearsay, nor fought shy of worldly excitements. The protracted run of a play at the Italian Comedy was recorded by him in "les Sabots" (No. 266), a visit behind the scenes at the Opera suggested "les Apprêts du ballet" (No. 238), an occasional peep through the attics of milliners and dressmakers brought on "le Lever" and "le Coucher des ouvrières" (Nos. 256, 257), the novel in vogue prompted the spicy episode of "Valmont" (No. 269), or its headiness was reflected in "le Roman dangereux" (No. 265). As for the painter's incursions among fast sets, what evidence could be more explicit than the fascinating trio of "Indiscrétion," "Comparaison," "Aveu difficile" (Nos. 203-205), than the "l'Innocence en danger," "les Offres séduisantes," "les petits Favoris," "Restaurant" (Nos. 255, 258, 259, 262)?

Domesticated homes had little attraction for him. If the pair of "le Déjeuner Anglais, la Leçon interrompue" (Nos. 250, 251) border on the exception, the caressing spaniel in the first betrays surroundings that have nothing in common with mongrel dogs or tabby cats, while the little boy intruding into the second hardly dares to show his face. In preference to whimpering children, Lavreince patronized ornamental Cupids *à la* Falconet, in and out of doors.

His talent as a miniaturist felt at ease within diminutive surfaces and could reduce to midget size "la Consolation," "la Balançoire," "les Nymphes," or scatter fifteen figures playing blindman's-buff, hot cockles, and puss in the corner on the ivory

lids of those bejewelled snuff and patch-boxes which since the days of the Regent and under the influence of Blarenberghe were the choicest articles of virtu in the hands of royalty, or in the show cases of financiers.

Not being a member of the French Academy, Lavreince never exhibited at the Louvre; his little pictures went direct to amateurs. Dubois alone, the court jeweller, had secured twenty of them, and ever since 1779 an etching of "le Billet doux" enjoyed the distinction of being included in the choicest portfolio of the period, that of Delezenne, another jeweller, whose collection eventually became the property of the Crown. Just as connoisseurs would quote Moreau drawings, vignettes by Gravelot, fleurons by Choffard as standard achievements of draughtsmanship, so a *gouache* by Lavreince was spoken of as the model of a dainty style of composition, an achievement maybe of trifling importance in art, yet one bound to survive as the accurate reflection of a piquant aspect of French life.

The revolutionary hurricane, the Davidian reaction that relegated Greuze and Fragonard to poverty and oblivion, did not spare the Swedish Baudouin, whose name, misspelt as usual, was last mentioned in Paris in 1789, when a selection of his works turned up at a pawnbroker's auction of unredeemed pledges and de Brea issued an inferior mezzotint reproduction of his "deux Cages." More fortunate, however, than the majority of contemporary artists whose aptitudes could not be hustled according to events, Lavreince instead of vegetating in France returned to his native country where, under the patronage of King Gustav III, he took to painting portraits[2] and historical scenes of local interest, in odd contrast with the *galanterie stücken* to which he soon reverted. His death sixteen years later was unnoticed by the "Mercure" and the "Journal."

As, with the single exception of "l'École de danse" recently presented to the Louvre, no public collection in France has any picture by him, an adequate estimate of the art of Lafrensen can only be formed at the Stockholm Museum, where some of his so-called conversation pieces are in comparatively fair condition, although, Baudouin-like in that respect, he took no precautions towards the preservation of a perishable process.[3] Very few of his miniatures are to be seen anywhere; some of them, unsigned, come under casual attributions or remain unidentified.[4]

However idle comparisons may be, Lavreince laid himself open to a parallel with Baudouin through the similarity of the opaque mediums used, the subjects treated, and the tastes to which he pandered. Baudouin's *gouaches*, unrivalled

prototypes of the kind, were nothing more than broad, bold, luminous sketches dashed off under the first impulse of a colourist who, shunning the cold pink finish of the illuminator, strove to obtain the general effect of a warm and vigorous oil-painting, leaving it to his interpreters to make up with modelling and contours for the vague indications of his lively scenes. Through all his works Lavreince remains the delicate miniaturist whose finical brush gives undue prominence to the minutest details of a composition, the scope of which is overreached to the detriment of breadth; with all his taste, refinement, and grace a hoar-frosted Baudouin, thawed out, inspirited and admirably improved upon by his engravers.

[1] Even in Sweden his surname Lafrensen was sometimes written Laurensen. In France it has been variously spelt: La Vrince, Lavrins, Lawrince, Lavreinse, Lavereince, Lawrence, Lavreince, Lavrence, Lauwerens, Laverns.

[2] The King's portrait *à la gouache*, his first work on returning to Sweden, is now at Rosenberg Castle, near Stockholm. Gaucher engraved it over the mention "Lafrensen pinx," the only instance of the painter's name being correctly spelt on a print.

[3] The originals of the "Mercure" and of the "Concert agréable" formerly in the Goncourt collection are in this respect a luminous exception.

[4] With the exception perhaps of one genuine miniature of which the central group reproduces the elegant couple in "Laisse-moi donc voir," five other lids of snuff-boxes, two adaptations of "la Balançoire mystérieuse" among them, labelled until recently as by Lavreince at the Wallace Collection are but paltry imitations dating from the second Empire, when an indiscriminate fancy for pre-revolutionary knick-knacks preceded the reflective revival of interest in eighteenth-century pictures, drawings, and prints. By way of compensation there is at Hertford House a drawing of unquestionable authenticity and characteristic grace, one apparently of the set of illustrations which Lavreince undertook for la Fontaine's tales and soon discarded. Five such drawings are mentioned in catalogues of sales between 1778 and 1800; that for "la Confidente" alone having been engraved.

237.

L'ACCIDENT IMPRÉVU

Engraved by LOUIS DARCIS in 1789

First state.
Coat of arms of the Duke of Orléans.
Bocher, No. 1.

WITH a portrait of Lafayette and a selection of democratic subjects, DARCIS, whose dates are not given by Portalis, won a certain popularity and adopted the stipple process of Bartolozzi, of which his French fellow craftsmen were making but scanty use as compared with the English. He engraved a negro and a negress after his own drawing over the equally negro legend: "Me free too," and no end of water-colours by C. Vernet, reproducing Directoire manners and dress, as well as a series of sporting prints. Having dedicated the plate before us to the Duke of Orléans, he could not resist giving an aristocratic turn to his own name by inserting in it an apostrophe with which the future Philippe Égalité might have readily dispensed.

Some impressions of "l'Accident imprévu" were printed in colours *à la poupée*, a term which in the parlance of the craft stands for the dabbers used for inking with different colours one and the same plate. The process, first tried by Lastman, Seghers, and Perrier in the seventeenth century, was freely used in England both on stipple and on mezzotint: a specimen of it appeared in Germany as early as 1738. In France the vogue of such a primitive method had something to do with the Anglomania which was at its height in 1780. Chaponnier availed himself of it on the "Prélude de Nina" after Boilly, so did some of Lavreince's engravers, Tresca and Darcis amongst them.

The original of this subject, a *gouache* in the possession of the Marquis de Varennes, is not one of the best by Lavreince. A drama of scorched linen between a laundry girl and a messenger boy would hardly appeal to the fancy of an ultra-fashionable artist, who may have tried his mediums at it, as a practical concession to the new order of things extending from politics to pictures and prints in the year 1789.

238.

LES APPRÊTS DU BALLET

Engraved by SALVATOR TRESCA in 1782

First state.
Bocher, No. 4.

AS dancers did not dress, undress, or have their hair done on the stage, "Lavrins" [*sic*] could not have painted this subject "from a stage box at the Opera" as stated on lettered impressions of "les Apprêts," but must have found his way behind the scenes. Yet the mention is interesting as affording a sidelight on the sources of observation from which the artist drew his knowledge of the gay underworld of Paris, although among few contemporary references to his sojourn in France, between 1773 and 1791, is a naïve letter of Sargell, the Swedish sculptor, commending "the steady and retiring habits of his countryman."

There can be no doubt that in order to gain an insight into the fast life of the capital, Lafrensen was bound to keep in touch with it. The preparations for a ballet could not be extemporized in a homely Chardinian interior between a tapestry worker and a girl peeling turnips: to impart reality to the scene either admission must have been sought to the dancing academies of Vestris and Noverre, or else passes obtained for more than one green room. As a matter of fact, the studies from nature of the "steady and retiring Swede" were divulged by the engraver when he inserted on this plate the circumstantial evidence of the opera box.

The "Mercure" advertised "les Apprêts"—a private interlude between the acts—as likely to attract much attention. Portalis and Beraldi consider it as Tresca's best work *à la poupée*; no etching of it exists.

L'ASSEMBLÉE AU CONCERT

By F. Dequevauviller. After N. Lavreince

L'ASSEMBLÉE AU SALON

By F. Dequevauviller. After N. Lavreince

239, 240.

L'ASSEMBLÉE AU CONCERT—L'ASSEMBLÉE AU SALON

A pair engraved by François Dequevauviller in 1783 and 1784

Intermediary states with titles in open block letters, before the dedication—undescribed by Bocher (Nos. 5 and 6).

Coat of arms of Her Highness Mlle. de Condé (a collateral branch of the Bourbons) and of the Duke de Luynes.

NO dates of birth and death are quoted by Portalis and Beraldi in their notice on DEQUEVAUVILLER, whose reputation is mainly due to his rendering of Lavreince's capital compositions known to all print lovers as the two "Assemblées." The fine intuition of fashionable manners evinced by the original *gouaches* has been interpreted by the engraver with equal distinction. Upon two analogous but wittier and livelier scenes, "le Concert, le Bal paré" (Nos. 304 and 305), Duclos displayed more brilliance; yet Dequevauviller's careful drawing, the relief of his figures and accessories, his skilful management of light impart to the whole a most harmonious effect.

The issue of this pair of prints attracted special attention. Both the "Mercure de France" and the "Journal de Paris" in advertising it had referred to "the "faithful reproduction of what takes place in the most select gatherings," and anyone with any position in society pretended to recognize himself or some intimate friend within the splendid setting of the music and drawing-rooms of the Prince de Conti and the Duke de Luynes. An invitation to spend a few days at l'Isle Adam or Dampierre[1] implied admission into the innermost circle of high life, a greater privilege than to attend a state ball at Versailles.

To entertain in stately residences was to "represent," and the prodigality of representation under Louis XVI the unavoidable duty of territorial magnates and high officials. With his precept "care for your wife and your château" the Duke de Broglie affected to look upon lavish hospitality as a return to domestic habits and the love of the ancestral soil. As a matter of fact the extravagance of keeping open house in the country contributed to ruin the nobility. To swell an inadequate rent roll lords of manors encroached upon the common lands and cleared them, thus wronging the peasants about whose lot they pretended to be much concerned,

and by going to law with them they fostered the risings of 1789 and the looting of magnificent seats.

❖ ❖ ❖

According to Bocher each personage of each "Assemblée" is a portrait, though neither group, including two toy dogs, has been completely identified. The central figure holding a music sheet in the "Concert" is supposed to be Mlle. de Condé; the Princesse de Lamballe in a typical Lavreince white gown sits at the harpsichord; Count Fersen, the Queen's devoted friend, tunes his 'cello; the Duc de Guines plays the flute. "Concerto di Musica" is written on the score lying on the floor. In the "Salon" the lovely Duchesse de Luynes plays a game of tric-trac; the Duke stands by the mantelpiece talking to the Duchesse de Castries; in the right corner the witty old Abbé de Beauvau leans over the card-table and tells a good story. Only men and women of rank who lived before 1789 knew the full joy of living. . . . What of the members of these merry parties ten years or so later? Emigration or exile, jailors or executioners scattered away their heedless existence.

Both prints are in great demand, not only owing to their artistic merit and the old-world charm of the subject, but as records of the deportment, dress, and interior appointments of the period. Both contain a summary, as it were, of the "Monument du costume" staged on the background of two authentic reception rooms where every item of upholstery, of woodwork and stucco responded to the general scheme of Louis XVI decoration as planned by Gabriel and Ledoux respectively; from the Aubusson carpet and screen, the concave doors carved by La Londe, the ceiling and overdoors painted by Hellé, and the statues of Melody and Harmony by Mouchy in the "Concert," to the inlaid floor of the "Salon," its doors by La Fosse, the overdoors and ceiling by Bocquet, the frieze by Clodion, the rock crystal chandelier by Germain, the clock and wall lights by Caffieri, the tables by Riesner, the corner urns by Vassé, and the Sèvres vases mounted by Gouthière. No overcrowding of furniture, no obtrusive details encroach upon the ambient sense of space, and the unaffected ease in which both companies idled their afternoons away, gossiping, flirting, reading, playing cards, or listening to music.

❖ ❖ ❖

Although arguments in drawing-rooms sound vulgar and out of tune, since every member of good society should hold exactly the same opinion, yet the spirit and technique of the "Assemblées" have their well-qualified detractor. Having likened most fashionable scenes engraved on a small scale to leaves scattered away by the autumn winds of 1792, Mr. Courboin in his essay on "l'Estampe Française" goes on to say that the public is apt to judge this particular pair not so much on its own merits as on the souvenir conjured up by it: the twilight of a society, a chapter of memoirs, a novel, nay some smart phrase of Mr. de Goncourt. "I am

"not the first to remark that too many people speak of the eighteenth century "through romantic recollections, but I should be the last to blame them for it, "even after writing of the 'Assemblée au salon' as of rather a poor plate in itself, "without a vista, an opening, an accent, or a sacrifice, and of the engraver as of a "craftsman who displays upon it a formal affability, as tiresome as a professional "smile."

The two *gouaches* passed from the Jauffret, the Mühlbacher, and the Boin collections to that of Mr. Walter Burns. Of them it has been said that they had better be seen on the prints. As to the prints themselves, the second is invariably feebler in tone; its title misspelt "Assemblé" is one of the orthographic slips of the eighteenth-century calligraphists which often mark early states, and are favourably looked upon by collectors.

[1] The stately summer residence of the Prince de Conti (Bourbon-Condé) was completely destroyed during the Revolution; a fine terrace on the Oise is the only vestige left of it. Dampierre is comparatively intact and still belongs to the de Luynes family.

241, 242.

LA BALANÇOIRE MYSTÉRIEUSE—LES NYMPHES SCRUPULEUSES

A pair engraved by GÉRARD VIDAL in 1784

Second and first states before the alteration.
Bocher, Nos. 9 and 42.

VIDAL (1742-1804) worked principally for Fragonard, Lavreince, and Mlle. Gerard. Some of his prints are marred by a certain heaviness of burin from which this pair is immune. As an advertising publisher he was ahead of the time. In January 1782 the "Mercure" urged its fashionable readers "to visit the shop "'rue St. Jacques' and examine a large selection of *galant* subjects after *Lavrins*, "whose *gouaches* are even more precious than those of Baudouin. Nobody as "yet has attained such finish with that special medium, nor applied it with more "imagination and grace, to say nothing of the dresses and ornaments introduced. "Mr. Vidal has engraved most of them at three livres a piece and every amateur "should hasten to collect the full set of his remarkable plates at No. 29 Rue des "Noyers."

With due deference to the charm and success of Lavreince, to place him above Baudouin was to praise the wares of Rue St. Jacques—first carriage entrance to the right—beyond the gullibility of customers. But Vidal knew his market, and "la Balançoire mystérieuse" for example, one of a so-called set of "bathers," passed through no less than nine states.

Referring to this pair, Vienne remarks in his monograph on Lavreince that the nude should have been avoided by minor eighteenth-century masters whose success was due to their knack of sketching airy deshabilles as well as to a spirited execution which would save an equivocal romance from grossness. None of these gifts, secondary in art, could make up for the style which is indispensable in drawing the undraped figure; so, unless the graver of Vidal had somewhat wronged the original lines of his models and made them unreal or exuberant, the nudity of nymphs appears to have been beyond the powers of Lavreince's training.

The whereabouts of the two original *gouaches* are unknown; two round miniatures both reproducing the "Balançoire," and labelled until recently as by Lavreince, at Hertford House, are but feeble and comparatively modern imitations.

LE BILLET DOUX

By N. de Launay. After N. Lavreince

QU'EN DIT L'ABBÉ?

By N. de Launay. After N. Lavreince

QU'EN DIT L'ABBÉ ?

243, 244.

LE BILLET DOUX—QU'EN DIT L'ABBÉ?

A pair engraved by NICOLAS DE LAUNAY in 1778 and 1788

The etchings of both: first and third states of the first; second state of the second.
Coat of arms of Mr. Ménage de Pressigny and of Countess d'Ogny respectively.
Bocher, Nos. 10 and 51.

TWO among the most representative prints of the period: two among the finest works of N. de LAUNAY who set his seal to their artistic merit by sketching on the lower margin of one of the etchings a few shrubs as *remarque*. Thanks to a perfect technique both aquafortis preparations convey far more than a suggestion of the subject in outline, and bring out so crisply the decorative features of each composition, that every particular of Louis XVI style in the sumptuous apartments represented can be more minutely scanned upon the unfinished than the finished state. As is the case with "l'heureux Moment," we find here the evidence of de Launay's mastery over two subjects, of which he saw fit to modify certain details, using his etchings as tests and guides. A careful comparison between them and the prints will show how far Lavreince's original lines needed focussing by the great engraver of this celebrated pair.

In the first, the action of the man's left leg has been changed and a cat introduced upon the scene.[1] In the second, the expression of the women's faces, the head-dresses, and caps have been altered; the left arm of the maid at the toilet, that of the pretty dealer unfolding the silk before the Abbé[2] have been shown; the knob-headed stick of the gentleman seated by the dressing-table has been turned into a crutch.

Here and there, somehow, the burin interfered with the work of the needle. In the "Billet" the initials of de Launay on the overdoor were blurred by shading lines, the rendering of the wood of the 'cello has lost its wonderful still-life likeness; so has the texture of the sheet of music "Arnaud et Armide"[3]—held by the elderly lady—and also of a "Recueil" lying upon the floor. In the finished state the chimney fire does not flame so vividly as in the preparation.

A decade elapsed between the issue of each print. The first was originally advertised by the "Mercure" as "a companion to the 'Couché' after Baudouin, of "the same size by the same engraver," a curious slip on the part of such an authority on art news. The scene was described as "a richly decorated music

"room where a gentleman in order to take a note handed to him by a sly young "lady occupies her mother's attention with an operatic score; the quality of the "work greatly contributing to the charm of the subject." Eventually the same periodical announced the publication of the second at the same price of six livres as "a fit counterpart to the 'Billet doux.'" The five and six states yielded by each plate respectively attest the immediate success of two compositions which among modern amateurs are greater favourites than ever, with a slight preference perhaps for "qu'en dit l'Abbé," where Lavreince's grouping, never very fortunate with more than two or three figures, has been singularly happy. As a *gouache* the "Billet" was feeble, and fetched only £220 at a sale in 1900.

Bourcard who, with wonted zeal, warns buyers against the last state of both engravings edited by Marcel, applies the superlative of *rarissimes* to the etchings and describes as *very rare* the first state of "le Billet" with the artists' names and with the title in small grey capitals within a cloud. Good impressions of the pair he considers delightful and covetable.

One of the two "qu'en dit l'Abbé" before us bears the stamp of the L. Galichon collection sold in 1895.

[1] In the early part of the eighteenth century, when under the auspices of Watteau, Lancret, and Boucher lovers used to frolic in the open air, endless lambs played the rôle of discreet bystanders. Later on, with the prevalence of interior scenes, toy dogs and pussy-cats were given the same importance by Baudouin, Lavreince, Fragonard and suggested more mischief.

[2] *Abbé*, originally the French name for an abbot, is often used in the general sense of clergyman. Before the Revolution, abbés who went into society were merely holders of livings, in minor orders, or even laymen. They would be engaged as tutors by noble families, and wore a short violet-coloured robe. Young men of letters paraded under that title, deriving from it a certain consideration, not infrequently misapplied, as arbiters in matters of taste, of light literature, and of home decoration.

[3] "Arnaud et Armide," a music drama, had been produced with great success in Paris in 1777, and contributed to establish the superiority of Glück over his Italian rival, Piccini.

COLIN MAILLARD

By Louis Lecœur. After N. Lavreince

245.

COLIN MAILLARD

Engraved by Louis Lecœur in 1789, printed in colours

First state.
Coat of arms of the Princess of Craon.
Bocher, No. 1 (among the attributions to Lavreince).

RATHER naïvely as if, as a rule, Lavreince's drawing were above reproach, and forgetting that one of the ladies in the "Assemblée au salon" (No. 240) is no less abnormally built than the heroine of Blind man's buff, Bocher expresses surprise at the awkward poise given to the latter and does not accept unreservedly the attribution to the Swedish *gouacheur*. He says: "under the title of Colin "Maillard sale catalogues attribute the plate to Lecœur after Lavreince, who "treated a more or less similar subject in miniature."

Bourcard is more positive. He mentions two states unknown to Bocher: one with the rubric "le Bandeau favorable," the other dedicated to the Princesse de Craon, bearing the inscription beneath the border "gravé par Louis F. le Sœur en 1789" which, after allowing for an orthographic slip, leaves no doubt as to the engraver's identity. Having credited Lecœur with a certain amount of skill, Portalis and Beraldi, who catalogue only ten of his works, leave out this very one; an inexplicable omission since collectors are attracted to it not merely on account of its rarity, but because of a peculiar delicacy of colours which might be described as "printed in nuances" or faded to a turn.

The original unsigned *gouache*, said to represent a group of the Beauvau-Craon family painted at their country seat, is still in their possession. The impression before us, once in the Bayard collection, was procured at the Halsey sale.

246, 247.

LE CONCERT AGRÉABLE—LE MERCURE DE FRANCE

A pair engraved by CHARLES NICOLAS VARIN and HENRI GUTTENBERG respectively in 1784

First and second states respectively.
Bocher, Nos. 13 and 38.

PORTALIS quotes the "Concert" as the best work of VARIN (1745-1805), pupil and assistant of A. de St. Aubin. It will be noticed that besides the artists' names and the date scratched, this rare proof bears the unusual mention "prem. Épr."—first impression—without any other letters. According to Bocher it was followed by a second state only, but Bourcard quotes a third one, with Depeuille's address in place of that of Vidal. No etching of it exists.

Although the "Mercure" and the "Journal de Paris" advertised the print "as one likely to please, because of its piquant composition," the composition itself betrayed the painter's shortcomings when handling a group of several figures. Had Varin possessed the science and the authority of a de Launay, he would have drawn the "Concert" over again before engraving it, so as to palliate the innate Northern stiffness of Lavreince's figures. Even the outlines of the guitar held by one of the players needed some skilful retouches.

Whether agreeable or otherwise, the print of "le Concert" should not be judged by itself, but rather as the acknowledged set-off to its delightful companion "le Mercure de France." GUTTENBERG the younger (1745-18?), who engraved it, hailed from Nuremberg. Having been trained in Paris at the school of Wille, together with his brother Carl, he joined the brilliant band engaged in the interpretation of the "Monument du costume." A letter of Moreau le Jeune commends "his neat and accurate burin." During the Revolution he returned to Bavaria: "for, since the Nation commandeers all the available paper to print *assignats*[1] "there is none left to print anything else upon it. In the midst of such topsy-"turvyness my head swims."

A comparison with Cochin's portrait of Beaumarchais,[2] dated 1773, dispels all doubt upon the identification of the subject: "Beaumarchais reading in the 'Mer-"cure de France' an extract from his 'Marriage of Figaro,'" as given by that news-

LE CONCERT AGRÉABLE

By C. N. Varin. After N. Lavreince

LE MERCURE DE FRANCE

By H. Guttenberg. After N. Lavreince

paper in its issue of 27 November 1784, with the mention: "one of the best plates after Lavreince." The resemblance of the fine profile, drawn on the same side as on the well-known print by St. Aubin, and standing out like a cameo, is striking.

Speaking of Lavreince's thorough assimilation of Parisian life and ways, Vienne offers the suggestion that the Swedish master may have asked Guttenberg to engrave his somewhat elaborate *gouache* of the "Mercure" so as to acquit an old debt of gratitude to the periodical which had placed its publicity at his service.

The originals of both compositions which in 1787 had been included in the Collet sale, were purchased for a few francs by Messrs. de Goncourt from a hair-dresser of the Rue Vaugirard: the "Concert," signed but undated; the "Mercure," finished, almost like a miniature, signed and dated 1782. The inevitable white morning frock worn by the leading lady on each scene is the painter's hall-mark.

[1] *Assignats* was the name given to notes chiefly for 100 francs, or £4 each, first issued by the Revolutionary government in 1790 as bonds on the security of the appropriated Church lands. They sank enormously in value until in March 1796 a gold louis (24 francs) bought 7,200 francs in *assignats*. Withdrawn in 1797, they were redeemed at a thirtieth of their nominal value by "territorial mandates."

[2] Pierre Caron de BEAUMARCHAIS (1732-1799), the son and apprentice of a watchmaker, possessed of handsome person and agreeable manners, secured appointment at court, changed his name, and became secretary to the King. His fame as a comic dramatist of Molièresque wit and far-reaching social influence was established by the production of "le Barbier de Seville" (1775) and "le Mariage de Figaro" (1784). His *mémoires*, published in 1774, are most entertaining.

248.

LA CONSOLATION DE L'ABSENCE

Engraved by NICOLAS DE LAUNAY in 1785

Second and third states.
Coat of arms of the Countess of Douglas.[1]
Bocher, No. 14.

BY inspiriting with the spontaneity of his drawing the somewhat strained lines of the Swedish painter, and by giving them the airiness which was wanting in the opaque medium of *gouaches*, de LAUNAY put the last touch of perfection on four plates after Lavreince which sum up the charming frivolity of the period. His interpretation of "qu'en dit l'Abbé," "le Billet doux," "l'heureux Moment," and "la Consolation" has placed that famous quartette of prints far above the originals.

The "Mercure" and "Journal" advertised the issue of "la Consolation" as the sixth of a different set which included "le Carquois" and "les Soins tardifs" after Baudouin (Nos. 4, 31), "la Complaisance" and "le petit Jour" after Freudenberger (Nos. 172, 177), and "l'heureux Moment" after Lavreince (No. 254). The execution was more homogeneous than the assortment of the various scenes, two of which, "la Complaisance" and "les Soins," encroached upon the rustic surroundings of a humbler world far removed from the luxury of boudoirs. Judging by the reproductions, "la Consolation" proved to be the most attractive: Vidal published a smaller print of it; C. Taylor engraved it in stipple under the artless English title of "happy Resemblance"; and Raunherm, a German, lithographed it as "the Husband's portrait."

At the Mühlbacher sale in 1899 the original *gouache* ranked in price next to the "Assemblées," the two most ambitious works of Lavreince. No subject could display the artist's gifts of taste and charm better than the soliloquy of a pretty woman from which that stumbling-block to his aptitudes was eliminated, the grouping of two or more figures. The composition combines his favourite requisites: a white gown bordered by a wide flounce, a playful toy dog, a room exquisitely appointed, richly carved garlands entwined on the walls round one of Boucher's Cupids, whose arrow pierces a heart made fonder by absence.[2]

[1] The incorrect form of address to "Milady Countess of Douglas" in the dedication casts a doubt on the accuracy of the title itself, which is not entered in any eighteenth-century British peerage. Already in

LA CONSOLATION DE L'ABSENCE

By N. DE LAUNAY. After N. LAVREINCE

1633 the eleventh Earl of Angus had been made Marquess, not Earl, of Douglas, and his grandson, who died in 1761, was Duke of Douglas. The coat of arms inserted on the tablet of "la Consolation" does not correspond with the armorial bearings of any Scottish nobleman of that ilk. True, some members of the Douglas family had become French subjects in the eighteenth century, three of them being Knights of St. Louis: their motto, "jamais arrière"; but if the dedicatee of the print was the wife of one of them, why style her as "my Lady"? The heraldic problem set by de Launay is unsolved.

[2] The late Mr. Walter M. Scott at Netherswell had a fine miniature of the "Consolation de l'absence" by Lavreince, with slight alterations, once the property of Lord Hertford.

249.

LE CONTRETEMPS

Engraved by FRANÇOIS DEQUEVAUVILLER in 1786

Second state.
Bocher, No. 15.

ON this plate DEQUEVAUVILLER adhered to the subdued tone which characterizes his best works. The bad example set by Baudouin in "le Curieux" (No. 10) reflected itself through no great strain upon the imagination of Lavreince: same subject and same success under the rose for a print, which like its forerunner went through no less than six states under the consecutive addresses of four different publishers: first of the engraver himself, as on the impression before us, secondly of Bance, thirdly of le Loutre, and fourthly of Marel, when the copper appears to have been worn out. The angry look cast by the maid upon the individual intruding upon the privacy of the scene depicted does not seem to have affected the market unfavourably. The "Journal de Paris" advertised the issue of "le Contretemps," together with that of "l'Indiscret" (No. 44), as "a fast pair." One word to the unwise was sufficient.

250, 251.

LE DÉJEUNER ANGLAIS—LA LEÇON INTERROMPUE

A pair engraved by GÉRARD VIDAL in 1785 and 1787

Third states.
Bocher, Nos. 17 and 35.

THE title of the first print is a mild thrust at the anglomania affected by the intimate circle of Count d'Artois and the Duke of Orléans during the last years of the old *régime*. The breakfast represented by Lavreince was held to be *à l'Anglaise* on four grounds: the gentleman is not only fully dressed for his early meal, but he is booted and spurred, ready for a ride; instead of paying attention to the lady who has risen betimes to keep him company, he reads the newspaper in her presence; notwithstanding the paper he cannot help watching his dog tempted by a lump of sugar; tea, not *café au lait*, is the beverage on the table. With such moral and material evidences before the onlooker, could breakfast be less French and more English, even though no morsel of solid food be served on the small round table?

That a maid and not the lady herself should pour the tea does not seem to have struck knowing people as hardly appropriate to the prevalent fashion, for the impeccable "Mercure de France" said of the print: "This cold breakfast where a "lady pats a dog, a gentleman by her side reads the gazette, and a housemaid pours "tea is perfectly accurate in all its details; a credit to the painter and the engraver."

In the second composition the artist, for whom children had no attraction as sitters, has introduced a peevish lad who rubs his eyes and hardly dares to show his face, while his mother's singing-master suspends the lesson and watches the scene. Among all the works of Lavreince, the boy has only another coetaneous rival, but one of a different breed, in the clumsy messenger of "l'Accident imprévu" (No. 237), himself half-turned round without the least boyish grace, a rival in fact of no importance.

It would seem as if the "Déjeuner" had been in greater demand than the "Leçon," for besides engraving a reversed replica of the pair, which Bocher has passed over, Vidal issued a reproduction of the first in stipple, minus the ornaments on the mantelpiece and the portrait on the left wall.

252, 253.

THE GROVE—THE GREEN PLOT

A pair: engraver unknown

First states.
Bocher, Nos. 273 (Moreau) and 53 (Lavreince).

THE English titles given to these prints betray the publisher's determination to disown them in case of awkward enquiries. In a similar way salacious French eighteenth-century literature would appear now and again under the fictitious name of an editor in London or Amsterdam.

Without giving any special reason, Bocher is inclined to attribute the first composition to Moreau le Jeune. As to the second, after praising its luminosity, he entered it provisionally in his appendix to the works of Lavreince, and having seen in the Mühlbacher collection a drawing for the "Green Plot" signed *Lawrence*, he stated in a note that the authenticity of the attribution is unquestionable.

Bourcard, who thinks that Copia may have been the engraver, mentions a modern reprint of both plates.

L'HEUREUX MOMENT

By N. de Launay. After N. Lavreince

254.

L'HEUREUX MOMENT

Engraved by NICOLAS DE LAUNAY in 1777

The etching and the second state.
The monogram of L. Lempereur, King's engraver, on the tablet.
Bocher, No. 28.

WHATEVER may have been the merit of a *gouache* which first established the claim of Lavreince to Baudouin's artistic succession, its interpretation by de Launay ranks among the finest works of the school. The signal rarity of the etching is enhanced in the eyes of collectors by the difference it presents in some particulars from the finished state, a further evidence of the initiative assumed by a great engraver either to modify a composition or to chasten its suggestions. As comparison between the two impressions will show, Mrs. Grundy, invisible *censor morum*, was appeased in this case by the introduction of a toy dog on the sofa where the lady's right leg had originally been outstretched.

Bocher mentions as many as seven states of this splendid print, differing according to the border, the tablet, the inscriptions and dedication, the varied and invariably wrong orthography of *Lavreinse* and *Lavrens*, the spelling of *ches* for the preposition *chez* before the address. The second state is called "exceedingly rare" by Bourcard, who describes it in connection with the Gerbeau sale of 1908.

The "Journal de Paris" recognized in the "heureux Moment" the well-known manner of Baudouin, and a fit companion to the "Carquois épuisé," "les Soins tardifs," and "la Complaisance maternelle" (Nos. 4, 31, 172): "all the charm of the "subject, if one may say so, has been transferred to the engraving and will delight "all fanciers of that particular style." With unusual effusiveness the "Mercure," after advertising the issue of the print at three livres, explained that "happy is the "lover who at the feet of his lady love, reads his own felicity in her eyes."

The etching lends itself admirably to the study of the decoration and hangings of the room represented. The original *gouache* passed from the Levy-Crémieux collection to that of Mr. Mühlbacher.

255.

L'INNOCENCE EN DANGER

Engraved by JEAN GABRIEL CAQUET in 1785

Second state.
Bocher, No. 31.

COLLECTORS, as a rule, do not seem to favour or trust the work of CAQUET (1749-1802), who, by drawing too freely from memory, did not always adhere to the originals given him to engrave, as happened, for instance, with several vignettes for La Fontaine's tales. The "Soirée du Palais Royal," however, as well as the print before us, are above any reproach of inaccuracy or unfinish; the fleuron alone under "l'Innocence," if no extra hand assisted him, shows Caquet to have been a fine burinist, a draughtsman of epigrammatic inventiveness. What more appropriate allegory could have been devised in this case than that of a Cupid who, before the entreaties of old age, drops his arrows and exacts money for his services?

The transparent allusion has not enlightened the English author of an introduction to "French line Engravings of the late eighteenth century," who sees here "a father showing his daughter an intercepted letter." If such be the subject, what can the old woman whisper to the girl?

By thrusting innocence at the mercy of an elderly libertine, Lavreince deserved the blame which three years before Diderot had cast upon his "Offres séduisantes" (No. 258), another version of the same story, where allowances might be made for the youth of the man represented.

256, 257.

LE LEVER DES OUVRIÈRES EN MODES— LE COUCHER DES OUVRIÈRES EN MODES

A pair engraved by François Dequevauviller in 1784 and 1788

The etching of the first and the second states of the pair.
Bocher, Nos. 36 and 16.

NO subjects could show off to better advantage the engraver's skill in rendering the different values of light and shadow than these lively episodes caught in the semi-privacy of two dormitories.

The prices fetched by the original *gouaches* at the Josse sale in 1894, when the first was knocked down at 8,900 francs against 4,700 francs for the second, show that the painter, and not Dequevauviller, was responsible for the dimness interfering with the clear view of the "Coucher," realistic as the effect may be, while the "Lever" has a luminosity of its own, not discordant with daybreak.

The prints are of the same size as the pictures, which, like the two "Assemblées" (Nos. 239, 240), had been commissioned by Mr. Joffret. At an interval of four years the "Mercure de France" advertised the "Lever" and the "Coucher," with the uniform mention of "agreeable compositions." To enliven in each case the yawns and lingerings of his nine and ten girls respectively, Lavreince has introduced the incident of a messenger delivering a letter at a most informal morning hour, and the excitement of fortune-telling by cards at bed-time. Both scenes were obviously connected with the "Apprêts du ballet" (No. 238), which preceded them; their popularity is witnessed by two contemporary reproductions of the first plate, one in stipple by J. B. Compagnie, the other in mezzotint badly printed in colours, signed L.C. (probably "les Campions," editors), also by a reduced copy of the second by W. Marks.

258.

LES OFFRES SÉDUISANTES

Engraved by Jean Louis Delignon in 1782

Proof with the artists' names scratched: traces of burin on the margins.
Bocher, No. 43.

NEXT to the "Innocence en Danger" (No. 255) this is one of the few eighteenth-century prints which suggests the venal side of love; the reference being less unseemly in this case, for while money bags are displayed on the floors of both interiors, a young man, not an elderly Don Juan, is the tempter here. The last of old Diderot's biting attacks on the whole breed of *galant* painters was stimulated by "les Offres," which he styled a disreputable signboard. But the broad qualification did not deter the "Mercure" from advertising "the latest addition to a remarkable choice of graceful plates after Lavreince: an interior scene treated with "thorough understanding of a delicate situation and intended as a companion to "the 'Restaurant,' also published by Vidal. The principal character is a particularly "attractive young woman wearing a white gown of striking effect; the young man "who tempts her with a jewel as well as the matron who watches them each have an "appropriate expression."

Bocher mentions a circular adaptation of the same subject in colours—engraver unknown—under the more plausible title of "galante Surprise."

LES OFFRES SÉDUISANTES

By J. L. Delignon. After N. Lavreince

LE PETIT FAVORI

By J. B. Chapuy. After N. Lavreince

259, 260.

LE PETIT FAVORI—LE JOLI CHIEN

The first engraved by Jean Baptiste Chapuy, printed in colours; the second engraved in stipple by Legrand

First state of the first: second state of the second.
Bocher, Appendix No. 4.

CHAPUY (1760-1802) was a successful engraver in colours after the manner of Janinet, with whom he collaborated, and whose "Comparaison" and "Aveu" he reproduced in small size. On a commission of Depain, the soulful hairdresser who induced ladies to give up erecting mazes and carrying frigates on their heads, he published fourteen plates of coiffures *à la* sensibility, candour, and charms of liberty. The frontispiece of the pretty manual represented Queen Marie Antoinette, on whose fair hair Cupids were pinning a coquettish plumed hat. Chapuy issued also a curious set of portraits in aquatint of the principal characters implicated in the diamond necklace affair: Cagliostro, Lamotte, and l'Oliva; he illustrated "Robinson Crusoe," and having taken up revolutionary subjects he interpreted on twenty prints the articles of the declaration of man's rights, the last of which "Peace unharnessing the horses of Mars from Victory's chariot and leading "Bonaparte to immortality," held the record of platitude.

After stating that "this charming colour print reproducing a subject treated "before by Fragonard is undoubtedly after Lavreince," Bocher inserted it provisionally in the appendix of his *catalogue raisonné* issued in 1875, under the heading of "prints without artists' names," and invited amateurs to throw light on the attribution. The light came from the Mühlbacher sale of 1881, when a second state of "les petits Favoris" turned up bearing the mention *Lavreince pinx.* Chapuy sculp. over the address of Joly, the publisher.

If only Lavreince had maintained for this piece of sheer wantonness the familiar name of "Gimblette," the avowed plagiarism from Fragonard would be excused; but to serve it out again under a new title, as if to protect by patent the same subject, was merely to set off the lack of that original sketchiness which saved from vulgarity the most risky Fragonardesque conceptions. What of the wonderful play of light on the roseate flesh tints of the genuine Gimblette as compared to the *gouache*?

But a painter's shortcomings do not necessarily depreciate the value of a print, and in the eyes of collectors the sins of this particular composition are amply covered by the signal rarity of the first state before us, known as the Mühlbacher state, for at that famous auction besides "les petits Favoris," where, consistently with a title inscribed in the plural, two dogs could be seen, an impression before letters until then unknown showed only one favourite. Evidently Chapuy had seen fit to add another on his plate, after taking a few proofs of his first and literal interpretation of Lavreince's *pastiche.* Five such proofs have since then come to the knowledge of Bourcard who calls them *rarissimes.*

Rare is also the oval replica of the same subject in stipple with slight alterations by Legrand, under the title of "joli Chien," apparently unknown to Bocher, who mentions instead another reproduction of "les petits Favoris" by Aubert. Picot published in London one more engraved version of the simili-Gimblette, and named it "new Thought." What's in a name?

LE REPENTIR TARDIF

By G. R. Levillain. After N. Lavreince

261.

LE REPENTIR TARDIF

Engraved by Gérard René Levillain

The etching, the first and second states.
Bocher, No. 52.

Levillain (1740-18?) is merely mentioned by Portalis and Beraldi as "a "vignettist, whose most important work was the charming, and telling inter- "pretation of Lavreince's 'Repentir.'" His address, "At the golden Snuff box," coincided with that of Tellier, a fashionable jeweller of the time.

Under the title of "unexpected Parting" both Chapuy and Lecœur reproduced in colours the central part of this print with several alterations, principally in the expression of the faces and the dressing gown of a sorrowful heroine. The rich interior decoration is an interesting specimen of the Louis XVI style.

Among the twenty *gouaches* by Lavreince sold in 1899, at the death of Mr. Mühlbacher, the original of the "Repentir" was considered to be one of the best.

262.

LE RESTAURANT

Engraved by Deni in 1782

Third state.
Bocher, No. 53.

DENI'S name without initials stands for the professional collaboration and technical harmony of Martial and Jeanne Deni, brother and sister, who seldom signed separately. When they did the full signature of Jeanne points to the better burin of the two, as is the case with some vignettes for the novels of Voltaire after Marillier and a few engravings for the "Cabinet Choiseul," which, at the sale of that famous collection, inaugurated the system of illustrated catalogues. Deni is inscribed under several fashion plates for the "Journal des Modes" of La Mésangère, as well as under a pompous portrait of Queen Marie Antoinette in court dress after Desrais, issued by Chéreau.

The address on this print shows that the two Deni were employed by Vidal, the engraver, a specialist of *galant* subjects. It was he who inserted in the "Mercure" of 17 August 1782 the following advertisement, where the artists' names are omitted: "We urge Mr. Vidal to publish the 'Restaurant,' a perfect "picture deserving all success: no subject could show more piquancy."

The "Journal de Paris" expressed a more cautious opinion: "The latest "engraving by Deni pitches a peculiar key suited to the taste of a certain class "of amateurs." That such proved to be the case is evidenced by a couple of contemporary reproductions, one called "le Consommé," also engraved by "Deni, rue des Mathurins" after a clumsy reversed adaptation of the same composition by Moitte, the other erroneously attributed to Moreau and mezzotinted by S. W. Reynolds under the title of "doux Entretien."

The "Restaurant" was sold as a companion to "les Offres séduisantes" (No. 258), a print more frequently met with, though not quite so satisfactory as to grouping. The original *gouache* by Lavreince is in the collection of Baron Edmond de Rothschild.

263.

LE CONSOMMÉ

Engraved by Deni

Lettered state.
Bocher, No. 53.

"THE 'Restaurant' [No. 262]," says Bocher, "has been imitated by Moitte "and again engraved by Deni under the new title 'le Consommé'; the "subject absolutely the same but in reverse; the maidservant standing on the "left and showing her profile."

Although Moitte, a minor painter, better known as the engraver of Baudouin's "Cathéchisme" and "Confessional" (Nos. 5 and 6), appears almost as a plagiarist of Lavreince in this composition, the attitudes, not so the grouping, of his figures differ somewhat, so do the decorations and upholstery of the room represented; the dress of the heroine, who wears a plumed hat, is looser, and the soubrette does not turn her back on the onlooker. No great effort of imagination is evinced by a little dog barking at the amorous couple. The drawing is inferior.

The print of the "Restaurant" must have met with a certain amount of success, if the same engraver found it worth while to reproduce so close an imitation of the original *gouache*.

This impression is from the Halsey collection.

264.

LE RETOUR TROP PRÉCIPITÉ

Engraved by JEAN-ANTOINE PIERRON in 1788

Second state.
Bocher, No. 54.

AFTER venturing in the wake of gayer subjects PIERRON (17?-18?) drew and engraved several religious compositions, as well as an elaborate masonic diploma. Vague as are the dates in his biography, the artist's address could not have been more precisely stated than on this print: "No. 164 Rue et Porte "St. Jacques, between a butcher and a baker"; a direction which on subsequent states was altered for that of the publisher's premises.

Having made for his *gouaches* a specialty of *galanterie*, it occurred to Lavreince that he too, like other painters, might occasionally turn for inspiration on that topic to the most popular French author and illustrate some of La Fontaine's tales. The attempt was limited to half a dozen coloured drawings, one of which, a scene from "la Confidente sans le savoir" out of the second volume, was reproduced under the fanciful title of "Retour trop précipité" as if to belie any ambition on the part of a foreign artist to vie with Lancret, Pater, Boucher, or Fragonard, and issue a regular set of semi-classical subjects.

The interpretation is typical of the man: characters, dresses, the statue of Cupid, and the very grove *à l'Anglaise* bear an unmistakably Louis XVI stamp far removed from the Gallic spirit of the text; even the huge bonnets donned by the heroines might have been provided by Mlle. Bertin, court milliner of bankrupt fame.[1] Be that as it may, a page of La Fontaine, as understood by the Swedish arbiter of French fashions, must needs be inserted in a representative portfolio of prints, next to the finest copy of the de Larmessin *suite* in existence and the superb vignettes of Fragonard for Didot's edition of the naughty novels.

A quotation from "la Confidente" inscribed on the tablet explains to what extent the return of a lady friend on the scene is untimely: "he paid his first "homage more effusively than he should have done." After the abbreviation "inv. del." the name erased from the plate was, no doubt, that of the draughtsman and engraver of the pretty fleuron, who may have had greater artistic merit

LE RETOUR TROP PRÉCIPITÉ

By J. A. Pierron. After N. Lavreince

LE RETOUR TROP PRECIPITE.

Grave d'Après la Composition de Original de Mr Lavreince

than Pierron, but who, by implied consent, must submit to the arbitrary anonymity imposed by publishers upon so-called print illustrators.

The *gouache* of "le Retour" belonged to Coclers, a burinist and amateur whose collection was sold in 1789.

[1] The following entry dated 2 February 1787 in the so-called "secret Memoirs" refers to Mlle. Bertin: "On Sunday morning she came as usual to submit bonnets, feathers, and trinkets to the Queen "but was refused admission. If, as it appears, against liabilities of a few million livres she has no assets, a "milliner's bankruptcy in that respect is as remarkable as that of the Prince de Guéménée." This great nobleman and his wife—*Gouvernante des Enfants de France*—honorary governess of the Royal children, held the record of prodigality under Louis XV. They kept open house, gave stupendous entertainments, built a theatre and fitted up a *café* for their friends and acquaintances to be treated free of charge. In 1782 their debts amounted to thirty-two million livres. Of the Prince de Soubise, who did not come to the help of Guéménée, his son-in-law, it was said that he would sooner settle the bills of Mlle. Guimard than those of his own daughter.

265.

LE ROMAN DANGEREUX

Engraved by Isidore Stanislas Helman in 1781

First and second states.
Coat of arms of Prince Scherbatow.
Bocher, No. 56.

At a sale in 1780 the original of this superb print fetched as much as 220 livres, one of the highest prices obtained by Lavreince for a single *gouache*. The subject and its execution were typical of his style: a rich interior decoration faultlessly carried out; plenty of light, plenty of space for two figures; a young woman wearing the white morning gown set in fashion by Queen Marie Antoinette and introduced over and over again by the painter as a "leit motiv" in his symphonies of pretty frocks; with it all floating over the composition a suggestive intention handled with the quintessence of imponderable grace. Could anything be more Parisian, eighteenth-century Parisian, than this scene drawn by a Swede, engraved by a Fleming, and dedicated to a Russian? The heady novel has dropped on the floor; behind the screen a gallant intruder restrains himself from uttering a word; the lady is dreaming.

The "Journal de Paris" advertised the print as a companion to the "Jardinier galant," and commended its "pleasing harmony."

LE ROMAN DANGEREUX

By I. S. Helman. After N. Lavreince

LE ROMAN DANGEREUX

LES SABOTS

By J. Couché. After N. Lavreince

266.

LES SABOTS

Engraved by Jacques Couché in 1784

Two impressions: first and second states.
Coat of arms of Count de Pons St. Maurice.
Bocher, No. 57.

Couché (1750-1832), a pupil of Le Vasseur and of Aliamet, undertook to engrave the three hundred and forty-five pictures at the Palais Royal, and had to relinquish his task in 1786, when the Duke of Orléans began to disperse that wonderful collection, mostly formed by the brother of Louis XIV, the majority of which migrated to England.[1]

Bocher refers to the original *gouache* belonging to Baron Pichon, as one of Lavreince's highly finished works. The subject was taken from the scene of a comic opera by Cazotte and Sedaine, "les Sabots," first played in 1768, where Babette, a country girl, "whose lips were ruddier than cherries," shared her cherries with Colin the shepherd, on condition that whoever ate the last would buy the other a ribbon at the village fair. Each one tried to cheat for the privilege of losing, each singing in the duet: "I shall pay for the ribbon, I shan't accept "the ribbon." Of the result of so strenuous a competition there seems to be no record, but the "Journal de Paris" in November 1784 bears witness to "the "charm of a familiar group suited to the taste of the time."[2]

Masquelier senior reproduced the same picture, but did not go further than the etching.

[1] Slade, an enterprising connoisseur, bought *en bloc* all the Dutch and Flemish masters.

[2] In 1770 this playlet nearly brought on a scandal, when a few officers from a provincial garrison came over to Paris with two or three actresses, hired the Audinot Theatre, and played "les Sabots." Choiseul, the War Minister, a strict disciplinarian, declared their behaviour unworthy of their calling and would have had them arrested but for the intervention of the Duc de Chartres—the future Egalité—one of the spectators. From that time military men were forbidden to appear on any stage in company with women.

267.

LE SÉDUCTEUR (?)

The etching.
Bocher, No. 7 of the Appendix to Lavreince.

AT the Leblanc sale in 1866 the impression before us was catalogued as "by "an anonymous eighteenth-century artist, unfinished, and representing a "father who wants to kill the seducer of his daughter." Under the above title, in brackets, Bocher quotes no other state but the etching; he has no hesitation in giving the composition to Lavreince and the etching to de Launay, mainly because of the analogy with the decorative features of "le Billet doux" and "qu'en dit l'Abbé" (Nos. 243, 244), as contrived by the painter and reproduced by the engraver. Less authoritatively Bourcard attributes to Dugoure[1] both the original *gouache*, once in the Josse collection, and the engraving after stating, however, that he has never seen the latter.

In all probability the plate was unfinished owing to the unsatisfactory grouping of the seven figures dragged into the most sensational of all boudoir and bedroom scenes of the time. To represent a domestic tragedy could hardly be in keeping with the aptitudes and mediums of Lavreince or the scope of an engraving, and to try and infuse a second life into "le Séducteur" proved hopeless even for the resourceful needle and burin of de Launay, whose attempt went no further than this rare etching.

[1] Dugoure (1749-18?), the school-mate of "Egalité," says of himself in his memoirs that he could draw perfectly at eight years of age and knew geometry at ten. From amateur he turned painter, sculptor, and engraver, drew some fine fashion plates, a few *galant* compositions, and was the first to apply art to industry as decorator of Count d'Artois's residences at Bagatelle, Maisons, and in Paris. He endeavoured to give an artistic appearance to playing-cards by turning kings into genii of war, peace, commerce, and learning; queens into liberties of thought, press, marriage, and cult; knaves into personifications of equal rank, right, property, and dress. By devising no end of patriotic emblems for the offices of the Republic he earned the name of David of Government Stationery.

LE SÉDUCTEUR (?)

After N. Lavreince

268.

SI TU VOULAIS

Engraved by Louis le Cœur, printed in colours

Only state.
Bocher, Appendix, No. 8.

THE attribution of the original to Lavreince rests on a vague analogy to most of his compositions: the address under the title identifies the engraver. Bocher adds no comment to the mere description of the subject; Bourcard, who saw the print for the first time in 1905, calls attention to its "transcending rarity."

269.

VALMONT AND ÉMILIE

Engraved by Romain Girard in 1788, printed in colours

First state.
Bocher, No. 62.

Girard (1751-?) learnt line engraving in England. Hearing of the curiosity aroused in London society by the novel "les Liaisons dangereuses," he urged Lavreince to illustrate some of its scenes and to entrust him with their reproduction; on condition that his would be the profit on sales abroad, while the painter would benefit by the sale in France. The arrangement accounts for the Anglo-French title of the corresponding prints; but details are lacking as to the result of the enterprise. According to Bocher, "Valmont and Émilie" proved to be the most successful composition of the set.

Pierre de Laclos (1741-1803), under the pretext of warning souls against the prevalent corruption and the propaganda of vice, gave in his epistolary novel, "les Liaisons dangereuses," a course of suggestive lectures on the tactics of immorality and the attractions of bad company: his heroine being a sort of feminine Lucifer, whose ideal is to entice innocent fellows and lead them astray.

By way of explaining the subject, the second state of the print has the following quotation from Letter XLVII, vol. i of the novel: "Émilie has read the "letter and laughs at it heartily; I trust you will do the same," the point of which is lost to us. The inscription on a later reprint is more circumstantial: "she was good enough to hold the inkstand and to let me use her as a desk."

The "Journal de Paris" advertised the sale of this plate in December 1788, at the exceptionally high figure of nine livres per copy in colours; four livres being charged for monochromatic ones, either red or bistre, engraved in stipple.

ANTOINE L. LEBEL

270.

LE COUP DE VENT

Engraved by Abraham Girardet in 1785

The etching and the finished state.

"LA voilà prise, la Fidelité en défaut" and this picture are given in Blanc's dictionary to Antoine L. LEBEL (1709-1793), who was received at the Academy in 1746 as a landscape painter. His biography goes no further. Not so scanty, on the other hand, is the information on A. GIRARDET (1764-1823), in whose fine but somewhat cold prints Portalis and Beraldi see the influence of Gaucher. "His etchings differ from those of other contemporary craftsmen and "might be likened to sketches worked with the point, on which a few accessories "are almost elaborately finished at random, while other significant traits are "neglected, as if the effect of the *ensemble* mattered little—a quaint process." A good draughtsman, trained by Nicollet, he engraved a few revolutionary scenes after his own compositions.

Girardet's portrait by himself, interpreted by Adam, gives him a gloomy appearance in odd contrast with the legend: "Bacchus, Folly, and the Fine Arts "escorted him in his last journey."

As remarked by Bourcard, the weak point of the picture is the head of the young man who tries hard to keep his hat on, while giving his arm to a girl most indiscreetly treated by a gust of wind under the laughing eyes of Cupid, but in sympathy with a little dog no less hustled about by the weather.

The original copper-plate apparently exists, together with that of its companion, "la Souris indiscrète."

MADAME VIGÉE-LEBRUN

271.

PORTRAIT OF QUEEN MARIE ANTOINETTE

Engraved by Pierre-Michel Alix, printed in colours

Second state.

SINCE its foundation in 1648 the French Academy of Fine Arts had fought shy of feminine candidates. In 1770, after the simultaneous admission of Mme. Valayer and Mlle. Roslin, Academicians put on record that however much they wished to encourage women artists by receiving a few in their midst, yet such privilege being foreign to their charter, it must never be granted to more than four ladies among forty members. Objections of another nature were raised in 1783 when Elizabeth VIGÉE-LEBRUN (1755-1842), the pupil of Doyen, Greuze, and Joseph Vernet, became a candidate: for her husband, an indifferent painter, was a well-known picture dealer. Since the august company of men who produced works of art objected to those who traded in them, a stringent clause had been inserted in the Statutes, six years before, as a protection against any such direct or indirect influence and intrusion. To overlook the compromising husband of a fair applicant seemed all the more awkward that Lebrun, who combined business with criticism, had slighted the self-esteem of more than one exhibitor at the Salon. But a charmer, a smooth talker by nature, Mme. Vigée-Lebrun, limner in ordinary to Marie Antoinette, whom she painted twenty-four times between 1779 and 1789, begged the Queen to intervene. Whereupon Louis XVI granted the dispensation in virtue of which "the wife of a fine art "drummer and jabberer" became a full-blown Royal Academician.

Elegance and prettiness were the chief attractions of her work. With tender grace she pandered to the sensitiveness and affectations of fashionable lady sitters in almost every capital where she sojourned in turns, since the marked favour she had enjoyed at Versailles made her presence in France extremely dangerous in troublous times. Notwithstanding the protracted expatriation, she remained thoroughly Parisian. Intense refinement, taste in costume, an ingenious eye for catching arrangements, give to her portraits an attractiveness which forces one to overlook the superficiality of her artistic intelligence.

PORTRAIT OF QUEEN MARIE ANTOINETTE

By P. M. Alix. After Madame Vigée-Lebrun

Besides several flattering likenesses of herself, one at the Uffizi above all, a delightful achievement is her blonde Princesse de Tallyrand[1] in pale blue, grey, and pure white, one of the sensations of the Doucet sale in 1912. Her Lady Hamilton as a Bacchante, Prince Regent, and Lord Byron show the least soft side of a talent which was rivalled in drawing-rooms by her well-trained contralto: "the voice of Favart and Venus's smile," wrote one of many admirers. When she reappeared in Paris a new class of patrons, principally upstarts, was ready to make much of her, but an unfortunate comparison between genuine and sham Princesses which escaped her lips while painting Caroline Murat, a sister of the First Consul, nipped Napoleonic favour in the bud, and Madame Vigée-Lebrun again went abroad.

Having parted company with her husband, who squandered her earnings, she learnt how to look after the returns of her incessant labours. According to size, she charged from one to six hundred louis for portraits. Her memoirs, extending over a most eventful span of years, reflect the social manners and character of two generations under very different conditions in French and foreign high life.

All colour prints of Marie Antoinette are works of the finest quality. Portalis and Beraldi describe the aquatint by ALIX—the border of which, engraved with the burin, was hand coloured—as one of the rarest and most remarkable specimens of that process, very seldom met in a fair condition. Their statement sets off the brilliance of the impression before us, which obviously was never exposed to light and suggests a double layer of rouge on the royal cheeks: a curious coincidence with a similar defect on Janinet's famous plate of the Queen, with which this is worthy of being compared. For if Alix gave to some of his Greuze subjects very nearly the appearance of chromos, his portraits vie with those of the most skilled contemporary engravers. During the Terror he was obliged to destroy whatever in his workshops might arouse suspicion and cause a search by the police. His well-known sets of Bourbon effigies he replaced with those of Lepelletier, Marat, and Charlotte Corday, "whose resemblance and animation" the "Journal de Paris" considered to be "above praise." Thence the exceptional rarity of this print dedicated to the King by Le Vachez, a publisher and dealer who sold it as a companion to an inferior one of Louis XVI by Sergent after Drelin.

Judging by the mature features and the expression, the life-size original picture, now in the Queen's state bedroom at Versailles, must have preceded very closely the last likeness of Marie Antoinette by her favourite painter, a full-length group scornfully designated at the Salon of 1789 as the Deficit.[2] If ever Messrs. Vuaflart and Bourin reach the last section but one of the great icono-

graphy already mentioned in this catalogue, it will be for them to determine the interval of time which separated the two canvasses.

The irony of the alphabetical classification of the works of Alix places this plate, his masterpiece, next to that of Marat, the "doctor of the guillotine."

Sergent and Macret respectively engraved two other portraits of the Queen by Mme. Vigée-Lebrun.

[1] Tallyrand, that "eminent knave," the leading weather-cock of French statesmen, married a divorced Mrs. Grant, whose beauty made as much sensation in Paris as her intellectual dullness and a deficient knowledge of French. The fact of her having been born in India was expressed by her as: "je suis d'Inde." So she was.

[2] A huge frame hung for many days at the Salon, before Mme. Vigée-Lebrun was ready to deliver the picture, prompted an easy reference to the Queen's extravagance and an empty Treasury.

CHARLES LEPEINTRE

272.

LA CAGE SYMBOLIQUE

Engraved by FESSARD

Second state.

OF LEPEINTRE no mention is made by any dictionary of French painters; Bourcard alone adds to his name the date of 1760 as that of his birth.

FESSARD (1740- ?), whose address was "at the wheelwright's opposite the "guard house," did not belong, according to Basan, to the family of Etienne Fessard of Chardinian fame. Portalis and Beraldi, who believe he was the pupil of Wille and of de Longueil, consider "la Cage" as his best plate, and quote among his works the illustrations of a journey through Russia and a number of vignettes after Gravelot and Saint Non.

Wille held this print as a standard example to his pupils on account of the fine rendering of the gown worn by the lady represented upon it. Bourcard, who lays stress on its rarity in the state before the dedication, is surprised at its having been comparatively overlooked by amateurs, while the demand for similar compositions is steadily increasing. Probably the pensive mood of the young mother who stands in contemplation before a cage, a bird, and a cat, trying to fathom what the future may have in store for her children, is considered to be outside the purport of an engraving. The doves and the arrow within the pretty fleuron give the symbol a more poetical significance.

The original pencil drawing was once in the Mühlbacher collection.

273.

LE DUC DE CHARTRES, SON ÉPOUSE ET SES ENFANTS

Engraved by Augustin de St. Aubin and Isidore Stanislas Helman in 1779

Second state.
Coat of arms of the Houses of Orléans and Bourbon-Penthièvre.
Bocher (A. de St. Aubin), No. 277.

THE collaboration of A. de St. AUBIN'S etching needle and of HELMAN'S burin under the old *régime* foretold the pliant harmony of political opinions between two artists who were to celebrate together Caesar's accession in 1804 by reproducing on a memorable print the civil and military Napoleonic feats. In the interval Helman had paid his tribute to rather different tendencies by dedicating to the Council of the Five hundred a set of "revolutionary memorabilia."

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The course of family life at the Palais Royal did not run as smoothly as on this life-size group by Lepeintre, or as on the courtly description of it inserted in the "Mercure de France," when the plate was issued at six livres by the engravers, jointly with the Royal Library.

The picture, exhibited at the Salon of 1777, was interpreted as follows by the usual anonymous critic: "the Duchess holds on her lap the Duc de Montpensier "in swaddling clothes: next to her the three year old Duc de Valois wonders who "the visitor may be. The Duke, who wears the ribbon and star of the St. Esprit, "suddenly remembering he has a wife and two babies, removes his hat. A painting "by Carracci on the wall presides over the scene."

That the then Duke of Chartres—great-grandson of the Regent—future Duke of Orléans, future Citizen Egalité, with the guillotine to follow (see No. 85), was not a good husband everybody knew. In the polite language of the time: "while treating his angelic spouse with every consideration, he preferred the "company of livelier and less estimable ladies."

Being a perfectly devoted wife, Louise Marie Adélaide de Bourbon, daughter of the Duke of Penthièvre and sister of the Prince of Lamballe, was determined to

ignore the gossip and insinuations that reached her ears. Her virtue had been compared with the dazzling whiteness of a lily among blackthorns. Five children were born of the marriage: Louis Philippe (1773-1850), Duc de Valois, who at nineteen was to be one of the *beaux* of Debucourt's "Promenade Publique" (No. 95), was to fight as "Chartres" in the revolutionary army, was to become King of the French on the deposition of Charles X in 1830, and then to abdicate and fly to England in 1848; the Duc de Montpensier, the Count de Beaujolais, and two girl twins, one of whom, Mlle. de Blois, was to be the life-long adviser of Louis Philippe. Up to this day each title coincides with the name of a gallery of the Palais Royal, the Orléans family residence.[1]

Besides preparing the plate with the etching needle, A. de St. Aubin finished each head. The likeness between the eldest boy and his well-known portraits and coins as "King Pear," a popular nickname due to the shape of his head, is both amusing and striking. St. Aubin's pencil drawing for the print, included in the portion of the Wallace Collection inherited by Sir John Scott, was described by Christie's catalogue of the Murray Scott sale in 1913 as "a Gentleman and his "family in an apartment" without any definite attribution. The lot, together with a sketch attributed to Latour, fetched a little over £7, and as a genuine St. Aubin has since found its place in one of the choicest collections of eighteenth-century works in Paris.

[1] The interest elicited by the Orléans children centred principally in Mme. de Genlis (1746-1830), who in 1781 was officially appointed their *Governor*, a bold step on the Duke's part which led to much social scandal.

This fashionable and witty forerunner of the women's rights movement was so determined to acquire and impart knowledge that between pedagogy and dress it was expected she could only find time to write an encyclopædia in her old age. The better to carry out her inventive methods of teaching, she composed a theatre of education for the Palais Royal schoolroom. History was taught with the help of a magic lantern: botany by a German botanist during walks in the country. Italian was to be spoken at luncheon, English at dinner, French in the intervals; not a moment must be left for idling or dreaming, or, as a discarded tutor remarked, to foster an original idea.

Being decidedly modern in her opinions, Mme. de Genlis sympathized with the Revolution, and on the fall of the Bastille she encouraged her young pupils to dance and shout with the mob in the Palais Royal garden. From that day the Duchess and the *Governor* fell out. More serious, however, was her influence over the Duke, who made to her no secret of his ambitions. The events of October 1793, when her husband was the first of the Girondins to be guillotined, compelled her to take refuge abroad. She survived until 1830, and saw Louis Philippe seated on the throne of France, but obtained from him only a small pension, for she had courted the favour of Napoleon, who declared she was the only woman whose meddling in politics he could tolerate.

The beautiful Pamela (1776-1831), who bore a striking likeness to Mrs. Sheridan, was the daughter of Mme. de Genlis and of Philippe Egalité. In 1792 Louis Philippe had been best man at her marriage to Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the Irish conspirator.

JEAN-BAPTISTE LE PRINCE

274.

L'AMOUR À L'ESPAGNOLE

Engraved by Augustin de St. Aubin and Noel Pruneau in 1783

The etching and the second state.
Coat of arms of the Marquis de la Borde.
Bocher (works of A. de St. Aubin), No. 455.

A FAIRLY good painter, a gifted musician, and an excellent engraver, LE PRINCE (1733-1781) led a wild life, and gained money only to waste it. A humble lad at Metz, he had the luck to please the Marshal de Belle-Isle, to be taken to Paris and placed under Boucher. When scarcely eighteen he left the *atelier*, married a woman of forty, and having run through her money relieved her also of his company. On his way to Russia he was seized by pirates, whom he charmed with his violin. After five years spent in Petrograd painting ceilings for the Imperial Palace, his return to Paris gave him almost as much popularity then as it might now. "He knew," writes Mariette, "how to turn to advantage a quantity of "sketches of Muscovite scenes." Curiosity contributed to give popularity to a picture of an Orthodox Christening which secured his reception at the Academy.

In his criticism of the Salon of 1767 Diderot treated with reckless frankness the mild Russian musicians, fortune-tellers, nurses, babies, and moujiks drawn by Le Prince, and displaying a wealth of ornaments and exotic materials in odd contrast with the figures themselves: "Had not this singular artist depended for "his subjects on customs more dignified and picturesque than ours, his merit "would soon fade away. Tartars and Cossacks might remark that for the sake of "tinsel and fripperies he has overlooked their national characteristics."

Thenceforth Le Prince relaxed his efforts and relied principally on the interest excited by unusual compositions redolent, it was said, of the flavour of caravan tea, for which he helped to propagate a vogue. He was then only thirty-three, and on the eve of inventing a form of aquatint, or *lavis* which imparted to the reproduction of his drawings the appearance of originals, and led from Demarteau's imitation of coloured chalks to the art of engraving in colours.[1] In spite of the success of his work his affairs were hopelessly involved. When he

died the niece who had taken care of him inherited a collection of liabilities, together with the secret of a process he had vainly tried to sell by public subscription. His recipe was the following: "First the outline of the subject is etched as "for an ordinary engraving. When the outline is bitten, the plate is covered "afresh with varnish washed over with a special greasy ink to make it porous or "granulous. The plate, once freed from grease, is wetted with a soapy and sugary "water intended to hold the resinous powder to be sprinkled over the heated "surface. The aquafortis having penetrated in the infinite number of grains which "reproduce the appearance of a wash drawing, the plate is ready for the bath."

The Academy eventually bought the secret. D'Angivilliers overruled all objections by declaring that an annuity of 1,200 livres to Mlle. Le Prince could be granted by a company on whom the Crown had settled a new endowment, besides the grant of the shops on the Pont Neuf.

A monograph by Hédou on the life of Le Prince dwells not only on his art but on his country house, his furniture, knick-knacks and library, his crockery and linen, including some documentary evidence on ten kitchen aprons.

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Before completing his etching A. de St. AUBIN took a trial proof of it. We have before us the definitive impression showing how far the point worked the background and the accessories, leaving the figures in pure aquafortis state. PRUNEAU (1751-?), a pupil of the eminent engraver, finished the print. The "Journal de Paris" commended "the mellow burin which, under the direction of "a well-known artist, has preserved the charm of the original on a plate to be "received with all the more favour that certain painters nowadays would not "have handled the subject with the same propriety." The "Mercure" praised "the "pleasing effect, the accurate details, the happy expressions on the countenances "represented." One paper quoted the price of the impression at five, the other at three livres. Neither of them went on to explain that courtship in Spanish fashion, as interpreted by Le Prince, did not consist so much in playing the guitar but, above all, in remaining at a respectful distance under the windows of one's sweetheart. It takes a good deal of serenading before Rosina encourages Almaviva to carry on his wooing indoors.

The dedication to the Marquis de la Borde, not the financier and composer of the famous "Chansons," was only inserted on the last state, though the coat of arms had been put in before the letters. The mark C.B. on the back of the etching denotes either the Bayard or the Berard collections.

[1] The next improvement was to be brought about twenty years later by Janinet who, on his so-called "imitation of aquatinted drawings" applied colour in the place of the wash laid with the brush on the varnish covering the etched plate.

275.

LE LEVER DE LA MARIÉE RUSSE

Etched by Augustin de St. Aubin

WHEN in 1768 de Bure published three folio volumes and an atlas of Chappe d'Auteroche's journey to Siberia, undertaken seven years before by the King's order, and illustrated by Le Prince, Moreau, and Carême, Grimm remarked that before accepting the commission the draughtsmen ought to have dropped all notions of conventional refinement for the sake of local colour and truth, so as not to give Tartars and Kalmucks the air of well-groomed Parisians dressed for the masquerade. The hint was principally meant for Le Prince, who throughout a long sojourn in Russia handled too gracefully and softly the types, costumes, and interiors he made a specialty of sketching. As for Moreau, who contributed to the work eleven vignettes, his Siberia drawn quietly at home was bound to lean to the side of prettiness.

Whatever may be thought of the countenances of its actors, the scene represented on this exceedingly rare etching is realistic enough to be looked upon as a barbaric counterpart of Moreau's etching of the "Couché de la mariée" (No. 9). Bocher describes it as follows: "The young woman seated on the nuptial "bed leans on her husband's arm, while relatives examine the night-gown she "has just taken off and her sister prepares another chemise. An old man peeps "through the door."

The ninety-three original sepia drawings for the "Voyage en Sibérie," after going through the de Bure and the La Bedouyère sales in 1853 and 1862 respectively, passed into the Olry Roederer library.

JEAN-ÉTIENNE LIOTARD

276.

MADEMOISELLE LAVERGNE

Engraved by Jean Daullé and Simon Francois Ravenet

First state.

A NATIVE of Geneva and a pupil of Lemoyne, LIOTARD (1702-1789) began by copying so skilfully the enamels of Petitot that his work was often mistaken for the originals. After a sojourn in Rome he accompanied Lord Duncannon to Constantinople in 1738, and by adopting the Oriental dress he won the life-long nickname of Turkish painter. His portraits of the Imperial Family in Vienna having met with considerable success, he visited England, exhibited at the Royal Academy, and above all turned to profit his knowledge of the Old Masters by selling for high prices several pictures picked up on the Continent.

An artist of great versatility and unequal merit, his reputation depended largely on his graceful pastel drawings, of which "the chocolate Girl" and the "belle Lyonnaise" at the Dresden Gallery are typical specimens; the best of all being his own portrait in the Painter's room at the Uffizi.

Although Liotard's visit to Versailles with letters from Empress Maria Theresa had been hailed as that of the Holbein of pastels, his talent was contested in Paris, where his manner seemed dry and the colours sour. A marked tendency to suppress or ignore shadows prompted the remark that this Turkish painter was practically a Chinaman. His memoirs denote an original mind, prone to paradoxes. Nature, in his opinion, thrives on the best intentions, but as she cannot carry them out, man must help her by "making art" and creating beauty. He coined the neologism "Ignorart" to describe the man in the street who can neither draw, nor even think artistically, and who calls a picture good or bad according to what his eyes see; while an artist judges what he sees through his aesthetic conceptions. In one respect Liotard considered an Ignorart's estimate upon the accuracy—*le vrai*—of a work of art as the most reliable.[1]

In 1733, when on a visit to his sister in Lyons, he painted the sedate likeness of her daughter, Mlle. Lavergne, as "la Liseuse." Twenty years later at Versailles he showed that portrait to the Dauphin by way of contrast, next to his elaborate

picture of Maurice de Saxe. The ladies of the court were so taken with it, that they urged the artist to submit it to the Queen, with the result that Maria Leczinska, Louis XV, and their family gave him sittings. Had he but paid more attention to Madame de Pompadour, royal favour would have lasted longer.

Although a good etcher, Liotard tried his hand at the English process of mezzotint without success.

When DAULLÉ (1703-1763) moved from Abbeville to Paris he was fairly familiar with the craft of "cutting the copper." Under the direction of Hecquet his brilliant point acquired a practical facility "which interfered," says Wille, "with the careful execution of his work," probably because, according to Mariette, "he lacked drawing," his training having been defective on the most important side.[2]

The success in 1735 of his Countess de Feuquières holding a likeness of Mignard, her father, extolled by the Abbé de Fontenay as if "for Daullé nature "had smoothed all difficulties away," induced Rigaud to make him his engraver under his keen supervision, and to drop the two Drevets, his favourite interpreters. So many commissions followed, mostly for portraits unequal in value—those of the young Pretender and of the Duke of York amongst them[3]—that the artist who, according to Mariette, "never accomplished much good all by himself, had "to seek for outside help to fulfil his engagements." In Wille he found an assistant whose style of execution bore the closest likeness to his own mechanical repetition of lines and an almost irritating regularity of strokes, the heads seldom being the best part of his plates, while draperies and accessories struck the eye more forcibly than the character of the features reproduced.

Basan, before devoting his energies to dealing, had been a pupil of Daullé, from whose example he learnt that it is better to do quickly and earn money than to do well. Wille noted in his journal: "Daullé was never ill. Being an extremely "rapid worker he has left nearly three hundred pieces, many of great reputation."

RAVENET (1706-1815), a clever burinist who had studied in France, settled in London in 1750 and never moved again, being employed by Boydell in the voluminous illustration of the principal pictures from the Devonshire, the Bessborough, the Essex, and Walpole collections. Lord Camden's portrait by Reynolds was engraved by him. Precision and finish combined with a keen faculty for interpreting colour distinguish his works, the harmony of which is sometimes spoilt by heavy outlines. The print before us, due to his successful collaboration with Daullé, affords an instance of the striking improvement often wrought by burinists upon the attractiveness of the pictures given them to reproduce. Anyone who, knowing this remarkable plate, asks at the Rijksmuseum at Amsterdam

for the pastel of Mlle. Lavergne is bound to find the original dull, laboured, and lacking breadth by comparison.

"As fine as it is rare," write Portalis and Beraldi. In his "Françaises du XVIIIme" Bourcard refers to the "unassuming beauty" of the sitter: in his "Côte" of 1912 he says, "very rare; has escaped even the searches of "Delignières." A small folio copy of it was mezzotinted by McArdell.

According as a little pin, pinned on the bodice of Liotard's niece, is more or less visible—one might say sharp—amateurs decide in favour or against this or that impression of the famous portrait.

[1] The "Gazette des Beaux Arts" of 1889 contains an entertaining essay on Liotard and his theories which got the start of those of Oscar Wilde, for whom art was to be man's spirited protest or his gallant attempt to teach nature her proper place: "Had nature been comfortable, mankind would never have "invented architecture." Perhaps Liotard as a critic assumed the dangerous distinction of differing from everybody else's opinion and certainly Wilde, with his vague Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite notions of pictures was no more of a connoisseur than is any man who can assimilate the chatter and modes of the arbiters.

[2] Lady Dilke writes: "The painter may appeal by colour, but no amount of *métier* can justify the "etcher or engraver who is wanting in what has been described as the uprightness of art. This charge of "something like want of honesty may be extended to another point. Daullé and men of his type took no "exact account of the difficulties they encountered. Should a fold of drapery demand an inconvenient "exercise of skill it was 'fudged' without scruple. The pure sincerity of their great predecessors was "unknown to them."

[3] All the unlettered impressions of these two portraits were sent to England. Daullé had previously executed one of the Pretender on a larger scale.

JOSEPH DE LONGUEIL

277.

LE RETOUR À LA VERTU

Engraved by DE LONGUEIL, printed in colours

First state.
Coat of arms of Mr. de Grandjean, the King's oculist.

J. DE LONGUEIL (1730-1792), King's engraver, had in turn been the pupil of Lebas, Aliamet, and Wille. Almost on a par with Choffard and Lemire, he brought the interpretation of vignettes to a high degree of perfection. Eisen, who practically monopolized his collaboration, owed to him the popularity of the finest illustrations for the Farmers-general edition of La Fontaine's tales.

Mr. Panhard, of motor-car fame, has published the catalogue of no less than five hundred plates by de Longueil, who used to entrust their preparation to skilled etchers, limiting his task to that of a consummate burinist. Of four colour prints due to him, Portalis and Beraldi consider as the best "le Retour à la vertu," the style and composition of which reminds them of Borel, although it has always been described as by and after de Longueil himself, no other name being written under it. In non-committal form Bourcard mentioned both attributions twenty-five years ago, but in 1912 he has boldly entered this engraving under the heading of Borel as painter, adding that impressions of it in colours are much sought after, with a remarkably steady rise of quotations at auctions.

Whether it was de Longueil or not who conceived the subject and drew the scene, the expressive powers of a print were put to rather too dramatic a test by the predicament in which a remorseful heroine finds herself when trying to retrace her steps back to virtue against her inclination, in the entreating presence of her friend, under a statue of Cupid whose arrows are by no means exhausted. Departing from virtue with or without a return ticket, facing the dangers of a *tête-à-tête*, discounting the happiness of a moment, were themes more suited to the vagueness of *gouache* effects than to the definite technique of a burinist.

LE RETOUR À LA VERTU

By and after J. DE LONGUEIL

LE RETOUR
A LA VERTU.

Dédié à Monsieur
Guillaume de Grandjean,

Conseiller, Lecteur, Professeur, Chirurgien Juré, Veuve et du Roy, en survivance
de la Famille Royale, du College Royale de Chirurgie
Chirurgien Adjoint Honoraire de la Société d'Emulation Académique
des Arts Sciences et Belles Lettres de Liege &c &c

Par son très Humble
et Obéissant Serviteur De Longueil

Avec Privilege Generaux de Sa Maj.té de Pr.e l'Empereur et de Leurs Hautes Puissances Mr. les

JEAN BAPTISTE MALLET

278, 279.

PAR ICI—CHIT CHIT

A pair engraved by Jacques Louis Copia, printed in colours

Second states.

COPIA (1764-1799), a German, born at Landau, began by drawing and engraving fleurons for Winckelmann's history of art. While studying in Paris, he identified himself with the technique of Prudhon, his master, whose softly toned-down shades, *effets estompés*, he reproduced by an intelligent use of pure stipple, reserving the burin for draperies and strong shadows. Among the best works of this conscientious rather than vigorous craftsman are a ghastly portrait of the murdered Marat and a set of illustrations for a treatise on "theatrical action and gesture."

The owner of the original *gouaches*, according to the inscription under the pair before us, was Citizen Darlet, whose principles were apparently not in keeping with the rigid standard of the time. An elegant composition redeems the triviality of two subjects closely related to the indiscretions of the old order. "Curious prints," says Portalis; "very rare in colours," adds Bourcard.

Reference to the painter engraver, J. B. MALLET, is made in this catalogue under the heading of a print by him after Van Gorp, "le Déjeuner de Fanfan" (No. 328).

CHARLES MONNET

280, 281.

VÉNUS ET ADONIS—LE ROI D'ÉTHIOPIE

Engraved by Gerard Vidal

First states.

ALTHOUGH MONNET (1732-1816), who became a member of the Academy of painting in 1765, realized he was no born colourist, and therefore applied himself almost wholly to drawing, yet it was left to the burins of Lemire and of Vidal to redeem his style from a little dryness. As pointed out by Portalis and Beraldi, his thirty-six skilfully composed, but rather cold, illustrations for the Ovid of 1767-1771 suffer by comparison with those contributed by Eisen, Gravelot, and Moreau to the same edition.

As Monnet showed a preference for subjects which set off his knowledge of anatomy, he may be excused for prying into the privacy of a King of Ethiopia, the land of the swarthy faced, the Cush of the Bible on both sides of the upper Nile.

The pair before us came from the Halsey collection.

JEAN-MICHEL MOREAU

(MOREAU LE JEUNE)

(1741-1814)

DURING the protracted reaction against eighteenth-century art, under the first Empire, the Restoration, and Louis Philippe, even the uninitiated and the prejudiced would condescend to turn over the leaves of an illustrated book of the time of Louis XVI, if it happened to bear the name of Moreau le Jeune, whose artistic renown had held out against the revolutions of taste.

Already, at eighteen years of age, this son of a hairdresser turned crockery-dealer, gave lessons at the Fine Arts Academy of Petrograd, where he had accompanied Le Lorrain, the painter, his first teacher. On returning to Paris in 1760 he entered the workshop of Lebas, that nursery of great engravers, and was occupied in the reproduction of Caylus's dull antiquities, and in preparing plates for other burinists. Marginal sketches, where his point played with the copper, testified to a ripening talent. He painted playing cards, he contributed nine vignettes of various trades to the Encyclopædia, he began to sketch from nature, and to invent, until one day he enlivened the plan of a street decoration at Rheims with a crowd of tiny spectators. From such an experiment to a masterpiece was but one step. The review on the Sablons Plain before Louis XV offered him in 1769 the opportunity to attain perfection in a line for which he felt a particular aptitude. In his drawing of that military pageant, now at the Louvre,[1] he followed the example set by Joseph Vernet, on whose pictures of French harbours one or two groups of men and women brought well to the fore were given more importance than the view itself, the accessory thus prevailing over the principal subject for the gratification of the onlooker, in spite of classical precepts. Here was a man endowed with an unprecedented sense of perspective, with the power of displaying on a sheet of paper a panorama teeming with life, who reproduced the minutest details of large masses, shading gradually off figures and things, till they would subside into a minute march past of fairy coaches led by fleas.

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Moreau's marriage with a granddaughter of Prault, the publisher,[2] determined the bent of his career. Thenceforth we find him incessantly employed in the

illustration of classic as well as of contemporary books, where he showed himself from the first a consummate artist by adding the title-page—a gem—to the "Pastor Fido" after Cochin. "Nothing in the whole range of this lovely form of work" writes Lady Dilke, "could be more finely rendered than the action of the two doves "who, as they nestle down on the quiver and arrows in the centre, exchange a kiss, "or than the Falconet-like group of the Graces disarming Cupid for a volume of "that name, engraved by de Launay."

As a result of his immediate success came the proposal to join Boucher, Eisen, Gravelot, Le Prince, and Monnet, a genial band engaged in the beautiful compositions for the Ovid of Lemire and Basan, dedicated to the future Philippe Égalité. Notwithstanding the unavoidable disparity between collaborators of a different temperament, this work as a whole presents a unity of inspiration and style, which makes it a perfect specimen of the kind. The unity being due, not so much to the editor's supervision as to the education of artists trained for the same aesthetic aims within an atmosphere of identical ideas.

At twenty-seven, with the aquafortis preparation for the famous print "le Couché de la mariée" (No. 9) after Baudouin, Moreau revealed himself as an etcher of exceptional crispness, raising his interpretation above the rank of the original. In 1770 the appointment of Court Draughtsman opened the way to his finest works. From that time his name ensured the fortune of the most fascinating library editions, at the head of which stands the "Chansons de La Borde" dedicated to Marie Antoinette, entirely engraved, both music and words. No vignettes could be more poetically inspired, or more delicately executed, than these twenty-five illustrations of pastoral and playful romances, sung by sweet warblers of yore.[3] Village gambols round a maypole, milkmaids a-riding, flocks of sheep filing off, a shepherd's hut by a vine arbour, a shepherdess confiding her heartache to the brook, the pretty, stagey sentimentality of the time, the old stories of rustic love, desire, and fear live on luminous plates where Cupids, flying away from the tradition of Watteau and Boucher, are Greuze's children on the wing. Led by the classic evolution of Louis XVI art, Moreau now sought the slenderness of antique lines, aiming at a Greek ideal of forms, adapting, as it were, his ephebic Geniuses to a Sèvres china mould, linking his willowy Virtues and Muses with the Diana of the Louvre. Perhaps unconsciously this renovated fashion of human anatomy forestalled the nymph-like attire of Directoire ladies, and trained French women to make themselves like Psyche short-waisted, like Artemis long-limbed.

In 1775 the maturity of Moreau's talent found scope in the reproduction of the last apotheosis of the Bourbons: the coronation of Louis XVI, studied and figured with a fullness of insight never attained by any picture of court ceremonies. The decorative ordinance of this drawing, its perspective, the varied animation of four hundred and eighty-five personages, portrayed at the impressive moment of the oath of fealty, convey an exalted vision of the Middle Ages and the eighteenth century commingled in setting, rites, and pomp. The method of the composition coincides with that of the "Revue aux Sablons." Though placed in the centre, the King, far from being the point to which all eyes converge, is lost in the midst of dignitaries and prelates who press round him. Again, as in Vernet's pictures, the group which dominates the scene by its artistic importance and lively by-play is that of the noblemen filling the foreground on the right, chatting together with high-bred ease, and behaving like casual and sceptical onlookers rather than as the hereditary and reverent witnesses of the fundamental rite of the Royalty.[4]

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Edmond de Goncourt remarks that at the time of the accession of Louis XVI to the throne, Paris in a fit of conceit determined not only to leave the enduring memory of its modish fancies and extravagances, by means of a periodical known as "la grande Gallerie des Modes," but also to preserve a graphic evidence of the characteristic deportment and bearing of society people. With this end in view what testimony could be more attractive than a series of prints showing dainty dames and dashing *beaux*, grouped within appropriate and decorative surroundings, wearing clothes and assuming airs suited to the various occasions represented?

Thanks to such invaluable data the historian, the painter, and the playwright would gain a perfect insight into the refinements and luxuries indulged in by a set of Frenchmen clinging to privileges that were immune from responsibilities.

Thus it came to pass that an ambitious editor raised for posterity an unprecedented monument, the digest, so to speak, of French costumes and manners in the eighteenth century. The first section of this truly regal book, published in 1774, contained twelve plates after Freudenberger, a conscientous, rather formal Bernese painter, who carried out his task more as an object lesson on the prevailing styles of dress and furniture than as a distinctive picture of high life. Probably because the spirit of his compositions did not seem to be quite up to the mark, the continuation of the work was entrusted in 1776 to Moreau le Jeune.

With brilliant intuition of the subject and its range Moreau picks up the thread where Freudenberger had dropped it, and in twelve drawings first recounts the story of the worldly young woman raised by motherhood to cares and delights above the frivolity of her circle and relapsing into it again. Then he shows the swaggering dandy about town developing through various stages of vanity, sport, and self-indulgence till he becomes a married, not too much married, man, to reach the conclusion that, far from the whirl and swirl of Paris, real happiness dwells in the country or stays at home. This series called of the *petit maître*—coxcomb—is even more attractive than that of the *jeune dame*, because of the freer attitudes given to characters represented in more informal scenes. Having controlled his imagination through the progress of twenty illustrations, so as to pay more attention to detail, the artist lets himself go at the climax in the episodes of "Oui ou non, la sortie de l'Opéra, la petite Loge, le Souper fin." How familiar he was with every circumstance encompassing pride and pleasure, what keen eyes he had for ornamental trifles and trappings, what power for touching with piquancy every mien and pose is shown by the variety of his collective groups.

This subtle exponent of the behaviour of a fast set proved to be as truthful as a new Chardin with a different class of people. Just as two score of years before the straightforward painter of the small *bourgeoisie* had depicted the joys and concerns of domestic firesides, Moreau with means of expression no less diversified, if not quite so telling, portrayed the sparkling existence of ladies and gentlemen of quality and of leisure. If he excelled in drawing the leaders of his airy mockery, he scattered no less skilfully about the casual silhouettes of spruce abbés, and hangers on, of tirewomen and flunkeys, endowed every one of them with singular grace and a typical individuality. Accustomed since early youth to jot down the salient traits of whatever came under his notice, he took to observing the gilded youth of his day as closely as Reaumur had examined all sorts of insects, or as Huber was about to investigate the life of the bee.[5] The application and perseverance that induce an entomologist to stand sentry for hours watching wasps, butterflies, or dragon flies without scaring them away, do not differ essentially from the qualities which guide an inquisitive draughtsman. And as Moreau's aim was not only to transfix manners with a pin, but also to desiccate dress, his attention would extend to furbelows and ruffles and milliner's baubles. David may well have ridiculed him as the ingenious fitter and showman of pretty dolls dating from 1775 or thereabouts; to reproduce fine feathers was not the sole knack of his pencil.

Architecture being included in the curriculum of every artist, when no practitioner went from studio to studio to supply painters with appropriate perspectives, Moreau himself drew his porticoes, colonnades, panellings, and mouldings so accurately that they might be copied and set up after his models. The fidelity of his backgrounds contribute to the life-likeness of his groups: setting and local colour harmonize with each function staged. Let other vignettists figure the appointments of a sumptuous home according to their personal fancy; Moreau invents nothing. Having apprehended next to characters the actuality of objects, he hired as inanimate sitters with the most fastidious discrimination cabinets and easy chairs of the finest make, screens displaying the latest arabesques. Apparently foreseeing the iconoclasm of a younger generation, he entrusted to his sepias the evidence of the chastening influence he had himself wielded over interior decoration together with Gabriel, Ledoux, Rousseau, Gouthière, Lalande, and Vassé, before eighteenth-century art and its accessory gallantries were strangled by the Revolution.

While the impeccable taste of the Louis XVI period is nowhere more consistently displayed than on the "Monument du costume," as the three sections of engravings issued between 1774 and 1783 are commonly called, no pictures convey with anything like the same efficiency the breeding and stately futility of an egotistic yet an easygoing caste dancing with light hearts and delicate vices on the verge of the abyss. Noblemen and courtiers, unconcerned about the nation's economic distress, may well have tempered the exclusiveness of their circle by affecting to worship intellectuality, and by welcoming alike encyclopædists, financiers, artists, and stage celebrities; they never lost the ceremonial sense nor dropped the grand manner. The gift, a unique gift, of endowing his groups with the characteristics of innate elegance and rank singles Moreau out as the draughtsman of the supreme graces of the *ancien régime*, when politeness had never been more exquisite, conversation more sparkling, scepticism wittier. Holding, as he did, on the point of his pencil the secret of reproducing those inimitable features, distinction, and good form, he epitomized on twenty-four sepias the glamour of French society more vividly than has been done by volumes of contemporary memoirs, and by carrying his documentation to the last limit of precision he became the primmest chronicler of drawing-rooms under Louis XVI. A mere glance at the prints that begin with "la Déclaration de la grossesse" and end with "le vrai Bonheur" conjures up a hackneyed praise of the past attributed to the

Prince de Ligne: "Whoever did not live in the years preceding 1789 cannot "conceive how delightful life was for the privileged few."

Although the "Monument du costume" had been advertised as a contribution to the annals of the period, not as a dry record of the prevailing styles, yet dressmakers, tailors, and upholsterers may not have been indifferent to the second thoughts lurking between the lines of two prefaces to the work. The notion recently flung about that the editors aimed at a stupendous advertisement on behalf of high-class tradesmen admits of a superficial comparison between the plates after Freudenberger and the "grande Gallerie des Modes," upon which Saint Aubin, Desrais, Leclerc, Watteau junior, and Simonet made no effort to conceal the practical scope of displaying in a ladies' magazine the drape of a skirt, the cut of a bodice, the shape of a sleeve. But who in turning over the sections of the same "Monument" entrusted to Moreau, and taking a human interest in the doings of a gay young blood and a lady of his set, would ever suspect he had before him a publication intended to attract rich customers to Paris, the international arbiter of fashions? If such was the genuine business purpose served by three "Suites d'estampes" brought out ostensibly to serve the history of French manners and costumes, it must be admitted that a genial illustrator disguised it beyond recognition by giving his task a psychologic turn and by stirring up before subscribers the costly glittering froth of existence with a thorough understanding of effect and abundance of grace.

Moreau lavished the poetry and sensitiveness of his talent on the book he liked best, "la Nouvelle Héloïse." When the "return to Nature" creed reached the highest pitch of popularity no artist entered in closer communion with the pathos and candour of Rousseau's heroine. To give his drawings the development of pictures, he must abandon the traditional octavo size; quarto plates are needed to interpret the impassioned pantomime of deep looks, semi-open lips, thoughtful brows, and speaking gestures enacted throughout that romantic and philosophic novel. What burns in the text burns in the engravings, where Julie, a spring-like girl of Greuzian type, maintains her serenity in the rapture of Saint Preux's love. Vignettes treated with such breadth one would hardly expect from the same hand which had lavished miniatures upon the songs of La Borde. A fertility above

repetitions, a variety of spontaneous effects, a balance of attitudes rare even on large canvases bring one in touch with the action represented.

For, despite the shortcomings of his education, Moreau, an assimilative reader, used reading as an artistic tool. His authority, to which even David had occasion to resort, was derived from a complete library of works of reference, the sort of documentary information that nowadays is overlooked by painters with more conceit and less study.

The engraved works of Moreau le Jeune cover about eighteen hundred plates, a piquant pell-mell of all subjects, in all sizes, for all kinds of purposes: from dealers' addresses, *ex-libris*, allegories on court events, and sketches for racing cups to political caricatures, menu cards, and head-dresses for a ladies' manual: from tickets for concerts and aviation experiments, from coats of arms, studies of noses, ears, and chins to a screen for Queen Marie Antoinette: from illustrations of novels, travels, and the Bible to a set of etchings of orthopædic appliances for a young lady's neck.[6]

When reducing the human form to insect size Moreau outdid Cochin, who was satisfied with three dots for the cast of his tiniest faces, nay, he surpassed Callot and Blarenberghe with their microcosms; for, irrespective of space, he succeeded invariably in reproducing a likeness or in suggesting an individual appearance by means of external outlines filled, as Goncourt puts it, from the inside. Thus, on the water-colour of a supper party at Louveciennes, now at the Louvre, the fine old profile of Louis XV and the pert little head of Du Barry are recognizable at first sight; thus his smallest Marie Antoinettes are living images, and on the headings of his "À propos de société," of visiting-card size, one can detect through a magnifier the least details of dresses and draperies as on the finest antique intaglio. This magic knack of minuteness never interfered with the full development of his larger compositions, nor with the sense of proportion displayed in his many portraits of contemporaries, from the malicious pug-dog countenance of Choiseul, the minister, to the benevolent likeness of Dr. Guillotin of grim celebrity.

The artist practised drawing in all its forms, with pencil, or pencil and chalks combined, slightly tinting his faces in English fashion. With bistre, his favourite medium, warmer than indian ink, he worked at the "Monument du costume" and at the majority of his sparkling vignettes, varying the monochromy of the

process from a sunny yellow to a vigorous tone which admits of such chiaroscuro effects as in "les Adieux, la petite Loge, and le Souper Fin" (Nos. 22, 33, 35 under 334), upon which Moreau has almost *Fragonardized*. The distribution of light was his forte. Sometimes, as in the "Rendez-vous pour Marly" (No. 21, *ibid.*), he drew with his lights, heightening a black outline with red and white crayon. Then again with powerful contrasts of gloom and luminosity he achieved such magic Rembrandtesque effects as have been transmitted by Lemire to the masterly plates of "Love's inoculation" and "The quarrel" for the Héloïse.

He never used wash more deliberately than in the "Fête à Louveciennes," his finest page in colours, intentionally faint colours, not entirely free from the architectural precision of his early days, but decidedly superior for transparency and animation to any similar work by Cochin. Not quite so successful is the project for a monument to Louis XVI (No. 216), engraved by Janinet; an effort to convey the illusion of marble and bronze combined. More attractive in the same technique are several sketches of theatrical costumes whereby Moreau, despite the prejudices of tradition, wrought a regular revolution in the wardrobe of singers and actors with a sense of fitness in which the authorities at the opera were deficient.[7]

Strange to say, in his admirable illustrations for the Bret edition of Molière, instead of troubling about the historical reconstitution of dresses and accessories, Moreau adhered to the fashions of 1770, regardless of the Louis XIV style of furniture and clothes. A venerable relic of Molière himself is the sole exception: the armchair of the *Malade imaginaire* on which one of the greatest playwrights of all times had sat shortly before expiring. To such quaint anachronisms we are indebted for many glimpses into the late eighteenth-century Paris with its large private residences, and its placid aspect, which must have made of the capital the finest provincial town of the French kingdom. The print for "les Fâcheux," however, presents a view of the park of Versailles with the fountain of the Pyramid.

Moreau is liable to one criticism: surfeit of accuracy. His drawing written, underlined, and overfinished, shows how precise were his graphic conceptions for the benefit of the engraver, a painter's extemporizing dash seldom pervading his lines. When it does, as in his most powerful illustrations for Rousseau, then breadth of treatment, momentariness, clashing opposition of light and darkness convey the possibilities of a pencil prompted by inspiration, carried away by passion, and casting aside for once all concern about his interpreters. To attain simple perfection, his art was too perfect.

Mr. Courboin points out Goncourt's mistake where he says that Moreau's drawings were hasty indications of scenes, vague bistres, clouds to which skilful burinists were expected to give line, modelling, and body. "Had Mr. de Goncourt "been less partial to artistic phrases, he would have acknowledged that such "current indications, however simply given, were set down with the utmost care, "that the bistres were light rather than vague, that the clouds were appropriately "placed to guide a craftsman in the pursuit of modelling. As to the line which "marks the limit enjoined by Moreau, if we judge by his fastidious supervision "over the plates wrought by his engravers, and by the corrections he demanded of "them, he would suffer no interference with it. We admire as much as Goncourt "does the 'intelligent interpretation' of each composition for the 'Monument du "costume,' but it must be added that Moreau produced hundreds of minutely "finished drawings which he expected to see transferred on the copper without any "addition whatever, as precisely as if he himself were to attend to it all."

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A Parisian to the core, Moreau was not an article for export. The life depicted in his La Borde, his Rousseau, his "Monument du costume" was essentially French, with unreal comic opera shepherds and real Trianon dandies. At a time when no painter, sculptor, or draughtsman could avoid going on a pilgrimage to Rome and Naples, his visit to Italy in 1786 finished him as an artist. He came back with academic pretentions, aiming at tragic effects on small compositions which proved to be declamatory and tedious. The fact is he lacked sufficient humanity to enter at a bound into Græco-Roman art, the outward simplicity of which covers a multitude of details. From that time on the vignettes of Moreau le Jeune are really the efforts of old Moreau to adopt a frigid formula in which emotion counts for naught. His second versions of Voltaire, Molière, and Rousseau intended to obliterate previous concessions to bad taste, his Corneille, Racine, and Gessner, his old and new Testament suggest the hackwork of an industrious apprentice who thinks all the while of something else. As Duplessis puts it: "outside influences "altered his manner, paralysed his faculties." Drawings, such as fill his sketch-book at the Louvre with personal interest and charm, were too trifling for the newly acquired dignity of free citizen. "Tullia driving a chariot over her father's body" was but the first of a series of Davidian themes through which he disowned a school the vitality of which had been derived from the senses rather than from the

reason. Gradually he pretended to forget whatever his talent owed to a regimen doomed to destruction: his training, the subjects of his compositions, his exquisite models, in one word the genuine French spirit which the Revolution was to adulterate; remembering only that, as David's father had been a marine store dealer, he was himself the son of a hairdresser.

The name which had signed Louis XV's review, the coronation of Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette's medallions held by goodness and lovingness,[8] so many more royal and loyal compositions, was now written under the medal for the Fine Arts Community constituted in 1793, under a Minerva donning the red cap, under a fashion plate for republican Frenchmen in a tight-fitting frock-coat, bright buckskin breeches, soft top-boots, a plumed hat, and a short dagger clinging to one side. Owing to the suspension of all publishing concerns, Moreau's fortunes had fallen so low that he depended entirely on the paltry pay of such work, and had to reiterate his applications for it. In 1798 he accepted as a makeshift the chair of Professor of drawing at the Paris central school, where Horace Vernet was to be one of his two thousand pupils. Under the Empire he made vain attempts to renew his former successes as a book illustrator: the tide had turned. When Louis XVIII in 1814 graciously restored to him the old appointment of Court Draughtsman, he held it but a few months before he died. A short obituary referred to "his abilities "wasted over court pageants, eighteenth-century fashions, songs of La Borde, *à* "*propos* of Laujon. . . ."[9]

For Moreau le Jeune the Revolution had been the wicked fairy whose wand deprived him at one stroke of his genius, leaving the wondrous retentiveness of his memory and the wit of his conversation unimpaired. Under a brusque appearance, through the bluntness of his expressions, the man's social charm never flagged: up to the last his original mind revealed a typical Frenchman of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy.

[1] This great sepia drawing, discovered by the brothers de Goncourt at a shirtmaker's, is now singularly out of place in the midst of the unequal and tiresome Chauchard collection at the Louvre. It was engraved in 1787 by Malbeste, Liénard, and Née.

[2] Pierre Prault (1683-1769), printer to the King, the head of a regular dynasty of booksellers, was a man of considerable standing among his corporation; his editions, noted for typographic accuracy and fine characters, are reckoned among the glories of French libraries. He closed his career by publishing Banier's translation of Ovid, one of the finest illustrated books of the century.

His three sons, François, Pierre, and Laurent, upheld the paternal tradition of taste and discrimination; Laurent's business card, engraved by Choffard, was worded as follows: "Prault the son—second shop after "Rue Git-le-Cœur—keeps all kinds of French and foreign books, has a selection of the best plays acted in

"various theatres, and sells them separately; undertakes to re-arrange libraries, to make catalogues, to hold "auction sales. All the novelties can be secured at his premises."

[3] Of the four volumes containing the Songs by Mr. de La Borde, Governor of the Louvre, and dedicated to the Dauphiness, the first alone is by Moreau, whose drawings for it are preserved in the library at Chantilly. A difference with the author interrupted the progress of that masterpiece of composition and of execution.

[4] Lady Dilke entirely misunderstands the spirit of this composition. She says: "The attention of "everybody being concentrated on the King, there is indeed no room for the amusing by-play which "entertains us in the 'Bal masqué' or the 'Jeu du Roi,' but this is more than compensated by the representa- "tive character of the various actors." On the contrary, Moreau has diverted the attention of many "spectators from the ceremony itself, into which only the principal performers seem to be absorbed.

[5] RÉAUMUR (1683-1757), the Pliny of his time, the inventor of the thermometer scale which bears his name, described minutely the appearance, habits, and locality of all known insects, except the beetle. His investigations were continued by HUBER (1750-1831), a Swiss, who revealed such extraordinary things in the life history of the honey-bee that the confirmation of several naturalists was required by the incredulous.

[6] A political skit by Moreau, advertised in London as "noble and proper" was on sale at R. Sayer's, Fleet Street, under the title of "*Troelfth* Cake," a French printer being responsible for the orthography. The likenesses of the four personages represented as holding between themselves the map of Poland were remarkable: Frederic II, King of Prussia, touching with his sword Dantzig, main object of his ambition; Joseph II, Austrian Emperor, pointing with his fingers to the course of the river Bug; Catherine II, Empress of Russia, clasping with both hands a large portion of the territory and staring at the King of Poland who endeavours to fasten on his head a tottering crown. History repeats itself.

[7] The clamorous success of a first night at the Opera in the winter of 1782 was due more than to the soprano, the tenor, or the *danseuse* Guimard, to the entirely new character of the dresses an improvement of which Moreau had taken the initiative in a memoir to the Administration of Royal Theatres: "Mythological "gods must no longer appear in Roman attire; tinsel and gold braid should not trim the draperies of "infernal divinities; heroes are not to wear gloves. . . . Tradition in these matters does not count: the "public is quite capable of discerning between costumes consistent with history or classic fable and ana- "chronistic or conventional properties. . . . Taste as well as economy will profit by the reform. . . ."

[8] Round four miniature portraits of the Queen drawn by Moreau le Jeune— the original of the finest in the collection of Mr. Irwin Laughlin—there seems to hover some of the sovereign elegance, youth, and hope which Royalty still represented at the time.

[9] In a preface to the second edition of his "Guide de l'amateur de livres à vignettes" Cohen maintains that Eisen, who excelled in the minute delineation of feminine beauty and attractiveness, lacked expression and failed with forcible subjects. "On the other hand Moreau, less finished than Eisen, succeeded "in all the styles he undertook. Do you want wit? Look at his first set of plates for Molière. Dramatic "themes? Glance over the Kehl edition of Voltaire or the Ariosto of Birmingham. Do you seek fine "compositions? Peruse the Rousseau of 1774 and the 'Suite d'estampes pour l'histoire du costume et des "mœurs'; unrestraint, grace, simplicity? La Borde's songs, the *à propos de Société*, offer to the eye no end "of pretty pictures. Finally, and in the midst of this inexhaustible fecundity, does one want an evidence of "the flexibility of his gifts? He illustrated Molière and Voltaire twice over in a different style, often in "the same situations and scenes. Unfortunately for him his career lasted longer than Eisen's, and while "the latter died in all the strength of his talent, Moreau survived his own. Changing manner and already "showing signs of weakness at the dawn of the nineteenth century, if some of his drawings of this "period show sparkle of genius, the last works from 1806 until his death may be likened to the depth of "night. Who would ever take the Moreau of Renouard's Crebillon, of Legrand's Fabliaux, of the translation "of Tom Jones for the Moreau of the songs of La Borde or of the Molière of Bret? He is like the "Corneille of Cid and of Cinna altered into the Corneille of Agésilas."

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LE FESTIN ROYAL—LE BAL MASQUÉ

A pair engraved by Moreau le Jeune in 1782

Second states.
Arms of the City of Paris.
Bocher, Nos. 200 and 201.

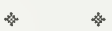
THESE two historical compositions display Moreau's remarkable gift of conferring a personal look and a particular action to the numerous little figures that people his so-called "Fêtes et événements publics." A draughtsman of pure observation, he had abandoned the tradition of Italian ordinance to which Cochin in his delineations of royal functions constantly adhered. Instead of subdividing a crowd into even groups of well-trained stage supers, he scattered it apparently no matter how, imparting to it the bustle of life, the variety of individual expression. When he wrote, as in this case, "drawn from nature," he affirmed the genuineness of what he himself had seen in the momentary incidents of a festival, a review, or a pageant, through the excitement and curiosity pervading the air when something is about to happen.

At twenty-four years of age the unconventional bend of Moreau's talent had been fostered by the commission to etch six seascapes and landscapes after Joseph Vernet, the marine painter who disturbed all classical canons by placing the accessory well on the foreground and relegating the principal to the back. While on somewhat similar works eighteenth-century artists had introduced the human element without any relation to the subject, Vernet's appropriate and spirited little figures reduced the landscape against which they stood to an authentic piece of scenery, not necessarily depending on topography or architecture. And as the expressive groups introduced on his "French seaports"—a series considered of national importance—aroused more interest than the harbours represented, Lebas and Cochin asked Moreau to engrave separately seven among such episodes as the Officer at Bordeaux, the Levantine merchant, the Afternoon stroll, and so on, which formed by themselves as many finished pictures of provincial life, irrespective of the background and the view.

That this daring and puzzling style of composition suited the sagacity of Moreau, who knew what caught the fancy of Parisians, was clearly shown in 1769

on the great sepia of "la vue de la Plaine des Sablons," and more so, if possible, in 1775, on no less an official drawing than "le serment de Louis XVI à son Sacre," the monumental drawing which in the words of de Goncourt "evinces the "science, the strength, the refinement, and full maturity of his powers" in the capacity of draughtsman to the King.

The same formula derived from Vernet prevails on four plates, commemorating the rejoicings for the birth of the Dauphin in 1782,[1] on the "Festin royal" in particular.



In his paternal complacence Louis XVI had instructed the Provost of Paris to celebrate with public festivities the realization of the hopes of France, promising to come over himself from Versailles to attend a civic banquet and a ball in the capital, where Louis XV had paid only five visits in fifty-nine years of reign.

The banquet took place on the 21st of January 1782, the date, eleven years later, of the King's execution. With an admirable sense of proportion, Moreau drew lengthwise the great hall, showing its flight of columns, its semicircular arches, and a double row of chandeliers, so that the eye should hover above the huge table, at one end of which Royalty was seated. With what skill, what variety of detail, by-play, and grouping the draughtsman has scattered round the stately apartment a select throng moving behind the bare shoulders and the jewelled coiffures of great ladies, or standing in the way of a legion of footmen who hurry to and from the sideboards. Provost Caumartin himself supervises the function at the head of an extraordinary household of City fathers, periwigged Aldermen, and Proctors, all dancing attendance upon their Majesties or waiting on Princes and Princesses of the blood: an entertainment worthy of a fairy scene.

The Royal ball took place the following night but one. Through the pilasters that cast a strong shadow we can see the courtyard of the Town hall transformed into a ball-room, ablaze with lights, packed with bystanders watching the scene from windows turned into boxes. The police appear to be unable to handle a surging sea of guests on a monarchical spree, on a sort of Shrove Tuesday of loyalty. Harlequins, punchinellos, and pierrots push close to the King himself who, bareheaded, absent-minded as usual, tucks up his white satin domino for fear of stumbling. Behind comes the Queen accompanied by her ladies; she wears a wide plumed hat, a flowing ruched gown. Who knows? Some of this jolly company now greeting and cheering, may within seven years join the mob in a far different frenzy of shouting and hissing.

The "Mercure de France" of the 22nd and 24th of January described both functions, named the personages present, and the travesties worn, mincing no words over the defective arrangements: "The first table laid for seventy-eight covers was "reserved for the Royal Family and seventy ladies of the nobility. The other tables

"were disgracefully served, not for lack of food, but through sheer want of fore-
"thought on the part of the organizers. Dukes and Peers had to dine off side
"dishes, because their Majesties having been promptly waited upon, everybody
"must rise at the same time. As for the reckless waste, suffice it to mention that
"of butcher's meat alone one hundred and two thousand weights went through the
"civic kitchens that night.

"The ball was equally badly managed, if not worse. To drive to the hall
"proved to be almost impossible, carriages had to be left at some distance; the
"number of the guests far exceeded the capacity of the rooms, and the company
"seemed to be sprinkled with Paris riff-raff. Who distributed, who misappropriated,
"the tickets? The promiscuity was nothing short of scandal.

"Their Majesties having been previously entertained to supper at the Temple,[2]
"proceeded from there to the dance, and while the King received a deputation the
"Queen dressed in the Treasurer's rooms. On making their entry into the gallery
"they were so squeezed by the throng that the Queen cried: 'I am stifling,' the
"King being obliged to force the way by using his elbows. Nevertheless they
"seemed to enjoy themselves and did not retire until late."

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Reverting now to Moreau's adherence to an example set by Vernet—a foregone conclusion, according to old-fashioned censors—where are Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette on the "Festin royal"? As they sit turning their backs on the spectator, it is not easy to find them. Though the Queen looks round, she is half hidden by a lady in a panniered gown; the King, surrounded by municipal officers, barely shows his profile above his armchair. The two guests of honour have been almost passed over for the sake of the perspective of the immense room, or the better to set off a swarm of courtiers and flunkeys. To vague, distant silhouettes defined by mere light and shade, he who could draw a full-length portrait on a lady's patch opposes the precision of the figures in the foreground. The least solemn are the most attractive. "It is the destiny or the chance of familiar things," writes Schefer, "to be of permanent interest. The originality, or the glamour of grand ceremonies, "wears off with time; the concern they may still awaken after scores of years "depends solely on some evidence of human observation in their graphic descrip-"tion. Under Moreau's pencil a touch of nature always tells."

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Moreau's set of four highly finished drawings showing, besides the two subjects before us, the Queen's arrival at the City hall and the fireworks in the City hall Square, mentioned by the "Journal de Paris" as "an astonishing exhibit" at the Salon of 1783, were sold in recent years by a great grandchild of the artist to Mr. Veil Picard. Goncourt wonders whether two bistre drawings described in

the Denon sale catalogue as representing two receptions held in the great rooms of the City hall, could be those of the "Festin" and the "Bal."

Much more time, says Mr. Courboin, was allowed to engrave an official function than some passing event. Thus four years were spent on Moreau's "Serment de Louis XVI" and seven years on the set commissioned by the Municipality of Paris after the festivities of January 1782. French history made greater strides than the burin.

In his "Eighteenth Century Draughtsmen" Portalis wrote: "Among "Moreau's chief works are the drawings of the 'Festin' and the 'Bal masqué.' Both "entertainments caught on the spot may be likened to photographs arranged with "taste and taken with talent, for Moreau's eye is worth more than all the lenses in "the world. The prints by the artist himself convey so vividly the liveliness of the "crowd and reproduce so perfectly the light effects, that one wonders whether they "are not finer than the original drawings. To secure them is to share the impres-"sion and vision of the Master."

Maherault remarks that the mention "Delignon sculp." on the finished state of the "Festin" before the coat of arms leads one to suppose that for his large engravings Moreau sought the help of a craftsman.

The copper-plates, preserved at the Chalcography of the Louvre, are still in use.

[1] When she gave birth to her first son, Queen Marie Antoinette, whose frivolity had somewhat alienated the people, was reported to have said: "now I shall lead the life of a mother, nurse my baby, "devote myself to his upbringing." The boy, delicate and rickety, not as Vigée-Lebrun's pictures represented him, died at seven years of age, being mercifully spared a more cruel fate.

[2] In 1792 the royal family was confined in the tower of the Temple, an ancient fortification razed to the ground in 1811.

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LA CINQUANTAINE (1771)

Second state.
Bocher, No. 240.

WITHIN a rich Louis XVI frame supported by two poplars, an old man and his wife, arm-in-arm, followed by their dog, contemplate after a lapse of fifty years the vision of their marriage personified by a couple crowned by Hymen, led by Fidelity and drawn to a classical altar by Cupids with ropes of flowers. On the clouds above a maiden enwreathed with roses is the symbol of youth.

In a note to the "Bibliothèque d'un bibliophile"—the Paillet library in 1885—Mr. H. Beraldi wrote: "Moreau was particularly well inspired in all his drawings "for La Borde. The lovely group known as the 'Golden wedding,' dated 1771 and "quoted in every catalogue—even Bocher's—as a print separately issued, appears "beyond doubt to have been intended as the title-page for the score of Desfontaine's "pastoral 'la Cinquantaine,' set to feeble music by La Borde and represented in "1771 at the Royal Academy."[1]

The success of the exquisite little work had a decisive influence over the draughtsman's progress. Two years later Benjamin de La Borde—that storekeeper of semiquavers—gave Moreau the opportunity of revealing himself as the consummate illustrator of amorous and playful romances by committing to him the vignettes for his "Chansons," dedicated to the Dauphiness.[2] Thus apart from the beauty of the composition and the quality of the engraving, the close connection with the finest perhaps of all the books of the century lends this rare plate a singular prestige in the eyes of collectors.

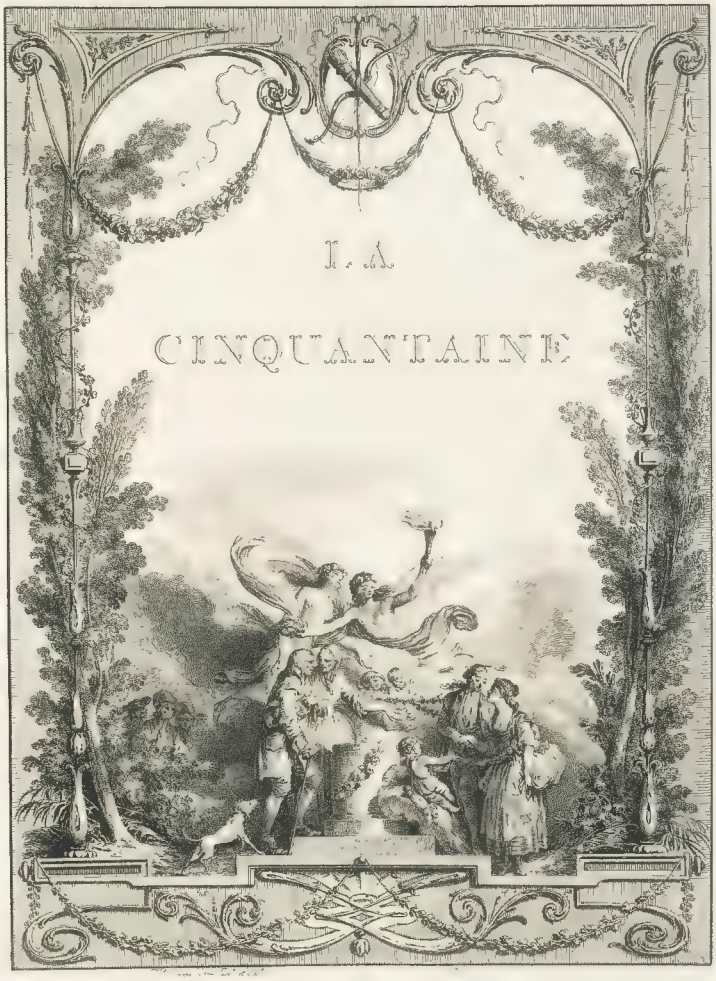
[1] Owing to the insignificant score, the performance was a failure, even though Mlle. Guimard, the eighteenth-century Terpsichore, had the leading dancing part. Legros, the tenor, having refused to sing in it, La Borde threatened him with a "cinquantaine" at For-l'Evêque, the prison for delinquent actors. The "Mémoires secrets" quote the following among the lampoons which assailed for the occasion the irrepressible musician and referred to his lean mistress:

"Après Rameau paraît La Borde:
quel compagnon, miséricorde!
Laissez notre oreille en repos;
de vos talents faites-nous grâce,
de la Guimard allez compter les os,
Monsieur l'auteur, on vous le passe."

[2] Jean Benjamin de La Borde (1734-1794) professed to have become a financier out of gratitude for the calling which had enabled his father to retrieve a fortune lost through Law's banking system. Appointed

LA CINQUANTAINE

By and after Moreau le Jeune


LA
CINQUANTAINE

in 1761 assistant to de Marchais, his brother-in-law, in the personal service of Louis XV, he became First Lord of the Bedchamber and a Farmer-general. Praised by Voltaire for the many accomplishments "which "made him the ornament and delight of society," he published a handsomely illustrated treatise on music and contributed to the issue of a superb "Description of France" in twelve folio volumes. Probably because he had studied under Rameau, he fancied himself a composer and wrote much *musiquette*, as it was called. Open-handed and genial, his fitful existence, spoilt by speculations, dissipation, and bad health, but ennobled by the love of letters and art, ended on the scaffold, when the Revolutionary tribunal discovered him in hiding at Rouen.

Essentially a lady's man, this friend of Mme. du Barry was as devoted to a lawful wife married rather late in life as he had been to Mlle. Guimard by whom he had a daughter in 1763. His "Maximes et Pensées" contain some pretty conceits: "To expect to be loved without loving is to try and light a torch "with an extinguished candle.—Women and riddles are dull the moment one sees through them.—A man "who is in love and pretends to be reasonable is like the lunatic who wants to show judgment.—Love on "the wane is a faded dream."

The amiable, wideawake countenance of La Borde drawn by Denon within a lyre and engraved by Masquelier in 1774, does not necessarily belong to the "Chansons," but is a qualifying addition to fine copies of that famous book. The etching is very rare.

Benjamin de La Borde is designated by bibliographers as the *Chansonnier*, to avoid confusion with another financier and art patron, Jean Joseph de La Borde (1724-1794) whom Choiseul raised to the rank of a Marquis for services rendered as Court banker. He established the first discounting house in France, opened up the Chausée d'Antin on the land he owned near the Boulevards, and lavished millions on his château of Mereville, for which Hubert Robert painted the fine panels now at the Chicago Art Institute. Though known throughout the kingdom for his integrity and generosity he, too, was beheaded during the Terror.

285.

COURONNEMENT DU BUSTE DE VOLTAIRE

Engraved by Charles Etienne Gaucher in 1782

First and third states.
Bocher, No. 261A.

GAUCHER (1741-1804), whom Basan had trained to "dig" a copper-plate, learnt under Lebas to draw those miniature portraits and fleurons which proved to be the triumph of his fairy-like point. Knowing a good deal about his art, he wrote a treatise on its history and theory and published in 1776 a series of notices on two hundred engravers for Fontenay's dictionary of artists. He became engaged, moreover, in a regular polemic with Quatremère de Quincy, the archæologist, who, among other paradoxes levelled at the newly instituted section of engraving at the Academy, maintained that without invention or imitation of nature there can be no art: "what is this ingenious process whereby any drawing "translated on copper can be multiplied by means of printing? An imperfect "mode of painting which by mere effects of light and shade conveys the approxi- "mate idea of a composition. What does an engraver do; what is he? Either he "has genius and will interpret his own original conceptions, in which case he is a "draughtsman: or, having no genius, he reproduces on a reduced scale the prompt- "ings of others and is a mechanical copyist." In his retort to this false piece of logic, Gaucher showed that if absence of colour be the main fault of engraving, sculpture should incur the same blame, even though no one may dare to acknowledge it. He quoted Cochin's happy definition of the art of translating the beauties of the richest language into one comparatively poor and yet endowed with certain equivalents inspired by genius. To the conceit and ignorance of an occasional detractor can be opposed the unanimous suffrage of enlightened men of taste. Whereupon, assuming an almost epic tone, he arrived at the conclusion that engraving contributes more than any other art to the wealth and splendour of Empires and Kingdoms!

Portalis and Beraldi have published a catalogue of the works of Gaucher amounting to over four hundred prints, some of them signed "Scevole," almost every one of a diminutive size, for his particular talent seemed to shun space. Unfortunately his touch proved to be too mellow for the wear and tear of the press,

COURONNEMENT DU BUSTE DE VOLTAIRE

By C. E. Gaucher. After Moreau le Jeune

and after a limited number of impressions were taken, his plates became so "muddy," in French studio parlance, that their merit could only be appreciated on early states. In 1784 he was elected a member of the Royal Academy in London. Being something of a poet, he wrote a comic opera and not a few mild rhymes.

Although the renown of Gaucher was principally due to portraits, his popularity benefited by the sensational "Crowning of the bust of Voltaire at the Théâtre Français, after the sixth performance of 'Irène,' the 30th of March 1778." Grimm, an eye-witness, describes the moment reproduced on the drawing by Moreau le Jeune: "Voltaire is seen in the stage-box on the second row reserved for Court "officials, between Mme. de Villette and his niece Mme. Denis.[1] The curtain falls, "applauses and cheers are renewed more persistently than ever. The grand old "man rises to thank the public, and almost simultaneously his bust is shown on a "pedestal in the centre of the stage, all the actors and actresses standing round it "in a semicircle, holding garlands and wreaths; many intruders who had found "their way behind the scenes crowding next to them and the supers.

"From every side of the house Voltaire's name is wildly cheered. First "Brizard, then the other actors crown the bust; next Mme. Vestris[2] comes forward "to recite a few lines improvised by the Marquis de St. Marc: 'you need not "'reach the dark shore to enjoy the honour of immortality. How splendid to "'deserve a crown, when France awards it.'

"The verses had to be repeated over again. At last Voltaire, moved by such "tokens of worship, apparently yielding under the weight of his laurels more so "than of four score of years, leaves the theatre almost carried in the arms of the "ladies lined along his passage."

To take such enthusiastic and uncommon ceremony in earnest one should bear in mind that Voltaire enjoyed in his life-time an undisputed and world-wide supremacy as the embodiment of Philosophy, History, Poetry, Prose narrative, and the Drama; nay, of Right, Justice, Wit and Incredulity.

"The same month of March 1778 that had seen the presentation of Benjamin "Franklin at Versailles," writes L. Smythe in the "Guardian of Marie Antoinette," "witnessed the apotheosis of the man termed by Maria Theresa the despiser of "divinity. Having hoped that King and Queen would grant him an audience, his "cup of happiness was spoilt by the icy indifference of royalty, and he learnt with "fury that Marie Antoinette, who preferred music to tragedy, had been seen to "yawn when Irène was privately produced at Versailles, the whole Court having "yawned in unison. Nevertheless he toiled at the perfecting of a work over which "many comedies were played. Hearing of the death of Lekain, who was to have "taken a leading part in it, he tied crepe round his nightcap as he received

"Bellecourt, the actor, and the extremely stout Mme. Vestris, who impersonated "the heroine in a Chinese dress. That very morning the Place Notre Dame grew "black with clerics imploring the Archbishop to obtain the removal of the foe to "Christianity worshipped by half Paris.

"When he entered his box at the theatre the vast throng clamoured in frenzy "for the crowning of his bust on the stage. Voltaire had donned for the occasion "a scarlet robe lined with ermine and perhaps because he was a man of twenty-"one at the death of Louis XIV he wore a huge brown unpowdered wig of the "time of Roi Soleil, in which his shrivelled head disappeared, showing only eyes "gleaming like those of a wild cat in a bush.

"The ceremony culminated in a failure. As it had been arranged that the "poet was to be drawn home in triumph by his adorers, a few enthusiasts dashed "to the carriage and cut the traces, only to find, when it came to pulling, that the "more muscular crowd had gone. Nothing could be done but mend the traces "hurriedly, and bring back the discarded horses wreathed with laurel, while the "patriarch shivered inside the sky-blue coach studded with gilt paper stars."

Somewhat prematurely the "Journal de Paris" of May 1778 apologized to its readers "for taking the liberty to announce that Gaucher was busy interpreting "with the burin and celebrating that moment when an enraptured audience granted "a licence of immortality to Voltaire in person." Notwithstanding the promised speed, four years elapsed before the print was completed. A prospectus, typical of eighteenth-century advertising literature, assured the subscribers that "the pictur-"esque effect of the illumination and decoration, of the costumes and dresses, the "excited attitudes and expressions of a crowded audience with eyes riveted on "Voltaire, every characteristic particular had been drawn from nature at the "theatre that very night. . . . The likeness of the bust is capital, but what, above "all, leaves nothing to be desired is the portrait of the great man himself to whom "homage is paid. The actors of his tragedy 'Irène' are shown in the order they "occupied during the ceremony. To the enthusiastic genius of Moreau are due the "vividness and grace of the composition. The print reproducing the beauties of "the original is to be had for 6 livres."

The first thought of the engraver was to present copies of his work to the French Academy and to the King of Prussia "the Achilles and the Homer of his country." As Mme. de Villette had agreed reluctantly to appear in it, Gaucher wrote: "To "carry out my purpose I had to overcome something more than the modesty of the "great man . . . but could I have lacked determination, considering that, only a few "days before death snatched him from the admiration of the century, Voltaire had

"deigned to smile benevolently upon my idea to perpetuate the event?" D'Alembert[3] was instructed to convey the thanks of the Immortals to the artist, who had also received a letter of acknowledgement from Frederick the Great.

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Owing to an unfortunate preference for the softest copper, Gaucher's plates proved to be hopelessly uneven and soon gave way. Late states of the "Couronnement" are therefore to be rejected. The so-called *bel état* or the desirable impression, for want of an unlettered proof, is one with the dedication to Mme. de Villette, with her coat of arms and the author's address, Rue St. Jacques "by the carriage "entrance opposite St. Ives." When arms, dedication, and privilege were suppressed, when the title was altered for that of "Hommages à Voltaire . . . persecuté par le despotisme, etc.," and Naudet's address replaced that of Gaucher, the engraving was already worn out, and the delightful groups of ladies behind the grate of the lower box on the right of the stage became almost indistinct.

Bocher quotes as many as seven states, including two etchings, on the first of which the bust, differently poised, is but a poor likeness of a younger Voltaire, and the spectator on the left, between two men turning their backs to the stage just above the initials A.P.D.R., smiles instead of bears the sulky mien which has been given him when the bust was likewise altered to represent Voltaire in his old age, with a Bachaumont wig, as he had sat to Houdon. In both etchings another gentleman looking up from the left of the pit wears neither the ribbon nor the star of an order which were subsequently added, probably the better to identify some great personage attending the significant function.[4] A wreath of flowers round the coat of arms and the inscription on the second tablet appear only on the fourth state.

"With a bevy of eager, pretty little faces crowding the boxes, with its "diminutive but strikingly life-like Voltaire, its fat and stumpy Mme. Denis . . . "the 'Couronnement,'" writes Portalis, "is one of the most interesting and "documental works of Moreau." A small, rather confused reproduction of Gaucher's plate by Couché junior has just missed the animation of so many countenances, the buzz, as it were, of the audience.

The original drawing exhibited in 1783, and inserted in a copy of the Kehl edition of "la Pucelle," which fetched 1,200 francs at the Clos sale in 1812, turned up in London at Sotheby's in the 'eighties and was purchased by the Morgand Library. From the collection of Lord Carnarvon it passed to that of Mr. Walter Burns, and is now in the collection of Mr. Mortimer L. Schiff. Goncourt mentions a preliminary sketch for it, also a replica in bistre sold at auction in the ninth Republican year, and again with the pictures, *gouaches*, and prints of Mr. Formalaques in 1804.

Bourcard looks upon this engraving as Gaucher's masterpiece. The first finished state before the border, with the artists' names scratched, is extremely rare.

[1] Madame Denis (1712-1790), the niece of Voltaire, kept house for him. She had adopted Mlle. de Varicourt "la belle et la bonne," a clever girl with literary aspirations, who married in 1777 the wealthy Marquis de Villette (1736-1793), a mediocre poet and a servile flatterer of Voltaire, who one year afterwards died at his house in the Rue de Beaune. Against the wishes of Madame Denis, Villette had the philosopher's heart embalmed and kept as an object of domestic worship. As heiress of the Patriarch of Ferney, his wife styled herself "Dame de Ferney-Voltaire," a title introduced by Gaucher in the dedication of the print to her.

In his capacity of Girondin Deputy at the Convention, Villette voted for the King's confinement as a hostage, not for his execution.

Madame Denis sold to Catherine II the library and papers of the philosopher. She presented to the Comédie Française his statue by Houdon, now in the *foyer* of that theatre, a masterpiece of naturalness, expression, and wit.

[2] Brizard (-1791), a great actor, of ideal dignity and simplicity, devoted to the opinions of the Encyclopædists. Mme. Vestris, a tragic actress, the French Lady Macbeth of the time, the rival of Mlle. Sainval, and the *protégée* of the Duc de Duras, was the aunt of Gaetano Vestris, the god of dancing, the eighteenth-century Nijinski.

[3] D'Alembert (1717-1783), mathematician and philosopher, associated with Diderot as a founder of the Encyclopædia, for which he wrote the preliminary discourse, was permanent secretary to the French Academy.

[4] A key to Moreau's drawing would read like a condensed "Who's Who" of the early part of Louis XVI's reign, and enable us to put names on this picked gathering of unsuspecting aristocrats and artful demagogues in embryo; the apotheosis of Voltaire, engineered as a rationalistic manifestation, having purposely been advertised as a mere fashionable event of literary interest, so as to attract courtiers and their set.

286.

QUEEN MARIE ANTOINETTE

Engraved by Charles-Etienne Gaucher in 1775

First state without the text.
Bocher, No. 34.

SEVERAL portraits of contemporary celebrities present yet another side of the fertile talent of Moreau le Jeune. On three exquisite medallions the artist drew the youthful profile of Marie Antoinette: the regal poise of her neck, a wealth of fair hair, with one curl falling on her shoulder, the perfect oval of the face, the prominent brow, the slightly arched nose, an attractive mouth almost unspoilt by the racial feature of the Hapsburgs, and the protruding lower lip.[1]

The skill of GAUCHER, who interpreted with the burin the first of the wonderful little likenesses, and that of Lemire, who engraved the other two, has caused amateurs to hesitate between the trio and to voice the same covetous admiration.[2] More classical in composition and execution than a famous heading for Henault's "Histoire de France," on which Gaucher in 1768 had reproduced Nattier's picture of Marie Leczinska within a wreath of lilies and roses by Choffard, the miniature print before us is indeed "a thing of beauty, of infinite sweetness, and surpassing "delicacy. Any work of art connected with Marie Antoinette," Bourcard goes on to say, "commands an exceptional price; we bow before a memory."

This medallion was commissioned by Prault, the editor of the "Monument du costume," for the dedicatory page of Fromageot's "Annals of Empress Maria Theresa," issued in 1775, and containing four vignettes by Moreau. As the text, "à la Reine," on the back of the same page was bound to affect the brilliance of the engraving, a few impressions of the heading by itself were taken on a comparatively large sheet of paper—*tirages à part*, as book illustrations were called when separately printed for the benefit of iconophiles; in other words, proofs before letters, the letters in this case being the address to Her Majesty immediately under the portrait. So rare in this condition is Gaucher's small cut, that according to Portalis and Beraldi no specimen of it turned up at auction between 1789 and 1880. One was sold in 1909. Ordinary impressions, included in the octavo volume and accompanied by the text, bear the mention "gravé par Gaucher de l'Academie des arts d'Angleterre," a membership of which the burinist was proud.

The original in pen and bistre, signed "J. M. Moreau 1774," once in the collections of Mr. E. Martin—sold in 1877—and Lord Carnarvon, belongs to Mr. Irwin Laughlin at Washington: "the drawing," says Bocher, "used by the engraver."

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As Louis XIV was *the* King, so the last Queen of France is still the Queen *par excellence*, and for short, the heroine of one of the most awful dramas of modern times. It is easy to account for the hobby of collectors who cling to her iconography: historic interest, beauty, and pathos contributed to designate MARIE ANTOINETTE (1755-1793) as a figure worthy to attract the attention of painters and sculptors of the latter part of the eighteenth century, and then again at the Restoration. Casting aside all sorts of caricatures, it is no exaggeration to place at five hundred the number of her engraved effigies: no less than three hundred may be seen at the Bibliothèque Nationale, which taken singly are far from presenting a uniform merit or the same authenticity. Before Messrs. Vuaflart and Bourin, with a rigorous process of selection, undertook a scientific research on the subject, barely twelve of those prints were regarded as reliable artistic documents, yet they sufficed to show the evolution of the Queen's looks from her insignificant appearance as a child until her arrival in France, and from the day of her coronation to that of her execution, when David did a cruel sketch of her as she was taken to the scaffold.[3]

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With her vivacity and eagerness for amusement Marie Antoinette as a little Archduchess eluded teachers and governesses, but she was naturally amiable, had a delightful spontaneity, an uncommon amount of common sense, and already at receptions she said the right thing to everybody.

At sixteen, when she married the heir to the throne of Louis XV, she was slender, not thin, with a lissom figure, a bright and prepossessing presence. Of medium height at the time, she grew up till nineteen. One shoulder was slightly more developed than the other, an imperfection concealed by skilful padding, only divulged twenty-two years later at the sack of the Tuileries when her corsets were thrown about. The mould of her feet, hands, and bosom was irreproachable. The features may not have been regular, but her appearance charmed from the very first, her sky-blue eyes had a most lively expression; the dazzling complexion, of "transparent roses and lilies," ought to have dispensed with the rouge demanded by fashion.

As she carried her head high, her deportment and the shape of her mouth might have given her a disdainful air if her affability and her desire to please had not

belied that haughty expression the moment she spoke. Her smile won all hearts, her voice did the rest, clear, bell-like, of the most taking sweetness; a touch of Austrian accent, soon attenuated, could not alter its spell. All her movements were harmonious and measured. Having been told that he would be subjugated by Marie Antoinette, and knowing the value of court praise, Horace Walpole, who in August 1775 had gone to Versailles in a sceptical spirit, wrote: "It was "impossible to see anything but the Queen. Hebes, Flora, and Graces are street "walkers to her. A statue of beauty when standing or sitting; grace itself when "she moves. They say she does not dance in time, but then it is wrong to dance "in time. . . . For beauty I saw none, or the Queen effaced all the rest: in her "behaviour as easy as divine."[4]—*Incessu patuit Dea.*

French she spoke correctly, notwithstanding certain Viennese expressions which, according to courtiers, lent to her speech colour and energy, above syntax. Music she loved, though herself an indifferent piano player; for reading, serious reading at least, she did not particularly care. Obviously her accomplishments were superficial, but she knew how to turn to advantage the little she had learnt: *savoir-faire*, the faculty of knowing just what to do and how to do it, served her instead of knowledge. In that as in other respects she was feminine to her finger tips.

"Her first impulse is always the right one," wrote Joseph II, her brother. . . . "She is a dear woman, a little fresh, not reflective enough, but with a foundation "of honesty and virtue." To which, as a corrective, he adds: "A madcap who "would rush all day long from recreation to entertainments, always within proper "bounds."[5]

However widely known, the personality of Marie Antoinette is still imperfectly understood. No queen has been depicted under more disparate or preconceived aspects. Alive she was the most vilified and abused woman of the century; in her own family, at court, and before the people no insinuations were spared to misinterpret her actions, no calumnies to blacken her name. On the morrow of her execution the opposite legend found favour: her tragic fate, her dignity in distress, the horror of the last moments have hallowed her with a nimbus that dazzles one's eyes. Her death has shielded her life from the judgement of history.

Although no one as yet has thoroughly sifted obdurate malevolence and sentimental indulgence, one thing is certain, that Marie Antoinette wore a martyr's crown. Whether a saint or not, she was above all a woman, probably the most representative of her sex in modern times. Alternatively or even simultaneously, she set the example of grievous inconsistencies and generous virtues: thence her posthumous prestige. That is why, at a distance of nearly one century and a half, the last Queen of France is still so near to us, so similar to what we are, a creature of flesh and blood who loved, laughed, wept, and suffered, for whom the most prejudiced judge cannot help feeling a secret fondness, an irresistible commiseration.

[1] The type coincides absolutely with that on Vassé's drawing for Marie Antoinette's medal, engraved by Demarteau. Hereditary physiognomic characteristics of the Queen were the "imperial" imperfection of the lower lip known as prognathism, a high forehead, eyes set far apart, and a somewhat heavy chin.

[2] On one, undated, the Queen is represented in profile turned to the right, crowned with flowers by two Cupids within a medallion resting on clouds. On the other, dated 1774, inscribed "à la Reine," the portrait, held by Goodness and Lovingness, is decked with flowers by the Graces. Below, France presents her children. Poesy and Painting celebrate the Queen's virtues. The latter is particularly striking in the etching state. See Bocher, Nos. 33 and 36.

[3] For about twenty-five years the descriptive catalogue of 495 engraved portraits of the Queen collected by Lord Ronald Gower was held as an authority, even though posthumous likenesses in this case did not contribute to genuine iconography, considering that the tragic end of Marie Antoinette favoured the issue of many idealized images founded on a loyal legend and the religion of memories. Besides, the alphabetic arrangement of the prints while facilitating research work was opposed to chronologic order. In a prefatory letter George Duplessis, who evidently had no knowledge of the subject, missed the opportunity of weeding out the typical portraits and of assigning to them the place due to documentary interest, not to beauty. Carried away by devotion to Marie Antoinette, Lord Ronald Gower himself in a contribution to the "Magazine of Art" of 1892 marked his preference for effigies where poetry has the best of sincerity. His sentimental judgement failed to unravel reality from the convention and flattery of more or less official portraiture.

Although the leading chapter of Bourcard's "les Françaises du XVIIIme Siècle" dwells on a more representative choice of prints of the Queen, it comes nowhere near the discrimination of Vuaflart and Bourin's critical essay. This work, interrupted indefinitely by the war, was to follow the stages of the physical development of the Archduchess, the Dauphiness, the young Queen, and the Queen at the zenith of her prestige and in her darkest days.

[4] This passage, often misquoted, occurs in a letter to the Countess of Upper Ossory dated the 23rd of August 1775; the occasion being the *bal paré* for the marriage of Madame Clothilde and the King of Sardinia.

[5] The death in 1780 of the Empress Maria Theresa, her mother, deprived Marie Antoinette of the wisest friend, though her position was strengthened by the birth of a Dauphin in 1781. Had she taken a consistent interest in public affairs, she might have exerted a considerable influence over the King, but her repugnance to serious matters prevailed, although to her children she was a devoted mother. In 1785 the diamond necklace intrigue revealed the depth of the hatred aroused by the calumnies of enemies and her own imprudence.

As to the justice of the charges upon which she was led to the guillotine, that she had facilitated the progress of foreign armies into France and kindled civil war within the republic, every fair-minded biographer admits that since the task of negotiating with the Constitutionalists and the Extremists had, through the King's apathy, devolved upon her, the safeguard of the monarchy and the safety of her husband and son were solely her aim.

LOUIS GABRIEL MOREAU

287, 288.

ON Y COURT PLUS D'UN DANGER—LE VILLAGEOIS ENTREPRENANT

A pair engraved by Louis Germain and Jean Baptiste Patas

First states, before all letters.

MOREAU l'aîné (1739-1806), a talented pupil of Demachy, was the first French eighteenth-century painter to whom it occurred that in order to represent natural scenery he ought to plant his easel in the country, not in the capital. Contrary to classic tradition and the practice of Joseph Vernet, nay in advance of the Romantic school, his modern landscapes—as Schefer calls them—presenting the bare charm of nature, without any figures to enliven them, were enough in themselves.[1] But as independent spirits who break away from accepted notions are no prophets in their own country, the elder Moreau tried in vain to become a Royal Academician. Whereupon the Academy of St. Luc—an academy of craftsmen—condescended to admit in their midst this sincere artist whose rare works have now the honours of the Louvre, while the emphatic canvases of some bigwigs who turned him aside at the time have been relegated to the lumber room.

Recently rediscovered and even hailed as a forerunner of the English landscapists both in oils and in water-colours, Moreau l'aîné had been overlooked by the admirers of his brother, to whose vocation and training he had contributed with his example and help. One of the vignettes for the Chansons de La Borde, "les jardins de Marly," with its background of hills sloping down to the Seine, might have been drawn by Louis Gabriel. Quite to the contrary the pair before us, prior to his characteristic and personal manner, shows him as adhering still to an elaborate and operatic style of composition, under the influence of Watteau's imitators.

The title "on y court plus d'un danger"—you run more than one danger there—given to the lettered state of the first of these two prints was subsequently altered to "l'Escarpolette," although the treatment of the subject is rather removed from that of a more popular Fragonardian namesake. The original *gouache*, which was shown at the retrospective exhibition of 1889, fetched 2,550 francs at the Josse

sale and has recently passed from the collection of Lord Carnarvon to that of Baron Maurice de Rothschild.

L. GERMAIN (1733-?), the engraver, is mentioned by Portalis and Beraldi merely as having prepared two prints after L. G. Moreau to be finished with the burin by PATAS.

[1] Mr. Schefer remarks: "By depopulating landscapes, the Barbizon school encouraged the desert. "Thanks to this novel conception trees, prairies, ponds, and clouds are as many fixtures of the natural "scenery which the spectator may enliven or sadden with memories and emotions, while man by classic "tradition used to be always and everywhere the master. Nature left to herself says and knows nothing."

JEAN-MARC NATTIER

289-291.

MME. DE ... AS FLORA
LA NUIT PASSE, L'AURORE PARAÎT
FLORE À SON LEVER

The first engraved by Voyez: the other two by Pierre Malœuvre

Second state of the first: first states of the second and third.

AFTER long hesitation between genre scenes and portraits J. M. NATTIER (1685-1766), the son of a painter, tried his hand at historical subjects, on the strength of which he was commissioned to copy Rubens' pictures at the Luxembourg for the purpose of having them engraved. He acquitted himself of the task so coldly that the prints reproduced the mere subjects without reflecting the master's spirit. Law, however, who was then Comptroller-General of French finances, bought the drawings with a few of his bank shares, a fabric of false credit, and induced Nattier to invest his savings in the East India Company, with the result that the artist, reduced to poverty by the financial collapse of 1720, turned his energies to portraiture alone. The seeming originality of his allegorical disguises, a rare combination of dignity and ease, secured for his effeminate and charming compositions a success out of all proportion to their intrinsic merit. Talent and mannerism, all the gifts and the weaknesses of this "pupil of the Graces" are summed up in his Magdalen at the Louvre, where the fair penitent, dressed in creamy satin, with powdered hair and rouged cheeks, ponders in a grotto over a handsome psalm book, a skull and crossbones by her side.

Nattier had a knack of turning his geese into swans. He could paint a fairly good likeness of a plain-looking woman in such a flattering manner that whoever saw the portrait and did not know the sitter thought her decidedly attractive, for an indefinable something beyond the reach of most artists gave to the general effect the glamour of beauty. With the most unstinted consumption of eagles, doves, tigerskins, and flowing draperies he depicted as demi-goddesses, vestals, nymphs, and naiads the daughters of Louis XV, the duchesses of the House of Orléans,

and almost as many artificial ladies of Versailles as Leporello's *mille e tre*, conferring upon each the same irreproachable and insipid perfections, instead of vitality and character.

A reaction in favour of a more expressive style upset the prestige of Nattier towards the end of his life and brought to the fore his son-in-law Tocqué, as well as Latour, Perronneau, and even Greuze.

❖ ❖ ❖

Without any iconographic foundation the "Mme. de . . ." before us is said to represent Pompadour. Bourcard, who accepts the identification, names Voyez junior, a pupil of Beauvarlet, as the burinist, who, in that case, could not have been born in 1774, as stated by Portalis and Beraldi; while VOYEZ the elder was more probably responsible for the plate itself published by Basan.

The attribution to Nattier of "la Nuit passe" is doubtful, or if the picture which corresponds with the engraving and is now in New York must be taken as the original, surely Nattier never saw it.[1] The lady figured as Dawn is taken to be the Marquise de la Tournelle, one of the four de Mailly de Nesles sisters, ousted by Pompadour from the King's affections and through whom fortune and favour had first come to the painter's studio. The same subject was reproduced in a print by Gaujean.

The Flora spreading flowers from the clouds is one of three acknowledged presentments by Nattier of Louise Henriette de Bourbon Conti, Duchess of Chartres, mother of Philippe Egalité, and a lovely ornament of the French court.[2]

MALŒUVRE (1740-1803), a pupil of Beauvarlet, engraved both "la Nuit" and "Flore." After working for years in London with Strange, he returned to Paris and rivalled with Tardieu and Balechou in the interpretation of fashionable portraits.

[1] One should be guarded from accepting as originals the numerous repetitions and *pastiches* made by Prevost, Coqueret, Hellard, de la Roche, and a few other professional copyists and drapery men of Nattier.

[2] The first example, dated 1744, of the portrait of Louise Henriette de Conti as the Goddess of youth by Nattier is not in Stockholm, as stated by Lady Dilke, but in the Otto Kahn collection in New York. The Duchess, wearing blue and white draperies, accompanied by the necessary eagle, makes a truly radiant picture in a light scale of colour, the blue employed being of an unusually fine quality.

JEAN BAPTISTE JOSEPH PATER

292, 293.

LE DÉSIR DE PLAIRE—LES PLAISIRS DE L'ÉTÉ

A pair engraved by Louis Surugue in 1743 and 1744

First states.

PATER (1696-1736), the son of a wood-carver, was taken in hand by his compatriot Watteau, whose difficult temper, however, soon put an end to a gratuitous tuition. It is said that on his death-bed the great master regretted having been hard on so promising an apprentice, a few of whose pictures, as had been the case with some works of Lancret, were mistaken for his own. The obvious similarity of subjects, combined with Pater's pleasing colours, may have supported to a superficial extent an attribution which connoisseurs would promptly condemn, because of the comparatively feeble drawing. No artist ever was so unwearied in application. Pater painted all day long and he sketched at night, until his health broke down completely and friends commented on his avowed desire for lucre by saying that he lived like a pauper in the hope to die a rich man.

SURUGUE senior (1686-1778), a skilled etcher and burinist, one of the forerunners of the new school, was the pupil of B. Picard. He engraved a portion of the Crozat pictures,[1] illustrated with his son Scarron's "Roman comique," after Pater's drawings, and published the complete set of his own prints, including his earliest attempt, the "Romelpot" or "Mustard-seller" after Bloemart.

The engraved works of Pater are not in great demand. Bourcard picks out this pair, of which no unlettered state was issued, as the most "esteemed." The "plaisirs de l'Été," reproducing a subject treated by the painter many times over, is particularly representative of his style. We learn from a rhyme under the plate, which could hardly be conceived objectively, that "as the lady emerges from the "bath, Cupid makes his escape through her eyes."

The title "Désir de plaire" affords the keynote to French eighteenth-century art taken as the brilliant adornment, not as the full expression of life.

[1] J. A. Crozat (1691-1740), the son of a famous financier of the time of Louis XIV, being passionately fond of the fine arts, devoted his enormous wealth to the formation of one of the most valuable private collections of paintings, drawings, marbles, prints, and cut stones that ever existed. The so-called "Cabinet

Crozat," issued under the supervision of Mariette between 1729 and 1742, contained reproductions of the pictures.

When the great collection was dispersed, the catalogue of the sale prepared again by Mariette constituted a work of the highest form of teaching; the weight and colour of every word in his description adding value and character to the whole event. The Duke of Orléans, father of Égalité, bought *en bloc* the Crozat intaglios and cut stones.

FRANÇOIS MARIE ISIDORE QUEVERDO

294, 295.

LA JARRETIÈRE—L'INDISCRET

A pair probably etched by QUEVERDO

The etchings.

TO give, as Bourcard does, these two exceedingly rare etchings to Dambrun is to ignore the professional aptitudes of a burinist who never prepared his plates. It is more consistent with the skill of Queverdo as an aquafortist to attribute to him the interpretation of a pair of his own vignettes for one of the suggestive novels then in vogue. The encompassing borders are distinctive features of the artist's ornamental work on his drawings and portraits.

Although Borel alone used *officially* the title of "l'Indiscret" (No. 44), many are the contemporary variants of a subject relished by eighteenth-century bachelors and old sinners. The name of Chatelain written at the back of the impression itself is puzzling, and does not correspond to any artist of the period. Three other "Jarretières" at least are known in French iconography after Boilly, Garneray, and Huet respectively, each conceived on the chivalrous understanding that the shame be his who thinks ill of it.

296, 297.

NOUVELLES DU BIEN-AIMÉ—LE SOMMEIL INTERROMPU

The first etched by Queverdo, finished by Antoine Louis Romanet
the second engraved by Jean Dambrun in 1787

The etching of the first and second states of the pair.

PORTALIS and Beraldi bestow an excessive praise upon the vignettes of QUEVERDO (1740-1797) by saying that they remind one of Moreau le Jeune. Highly accomplished as an etcher, not quite so gifted, though very prolific, as an illustrator, this draughtsman lacked the charm which is the essence of French art. As all the plates prepared by him had to be finished by burinists, his contribution to St. Non's "Journey to Naples" was limited to aquafortis preparations, but few contemporary engravers handled the needle as skilfully as he: witness the fine preliminary state of the "Nouvelles du bien-aimé," the prototype of the subjects to which he went by preference under the old regime.

Stirred by democratic sympathies and a subsidy from the Republican government, Queverdo altered his style for a time and drew several episodes of the Revolution. Then, reverting to a former and less strenuous task, he laid himself out specially to compose and etch the tiny plates of fancy almanacs suitable for new year's gifts, daintily bound, fitted with a gold pencil and a looking-glass. Mere toys these "*vade mecums* of pretty women," but well worthy of their vogue as microcosmic "Monuments du costume" of a kind. Whether illustrating one year the street cries of costermongers, or presenting the next a selection of scenes from popular plays, whether they reproduced the front windows of fashionable shops, or gave glimpses of night life in Paris, they succeeded invariably in fitting within two inches of space the quaintest touches of local colour. The drawings may have been finical and the figures a trifle stiff, but each booklet was amusing, handy to refer to for assignations or addresses, and scarcely a demirep or a *muscadin* paraded in the Palais Royal wooden gallery who could not produce out of her reticule or his pocket the year's miniature ledger for the profit and loss of fast life.[1]

It was Queverdo's good fortune to secure the almost life-long co-operation of so able an engraver as Dambrun; but it was hardly the latter's fault if his fine

NOUVELLES DU BIEN-AIMÉ

By Queverdo and Romanet. After F. M. I. Queverdo

NOUVELLE DU
BIEN AIMÉ

burin could not obliterate the marks of labour and strain for which the originals given him to reproduce were responsible. The "Sommeil interrompu" is a case in point. Probably because such artists as Moreau, Cochin, St. Aubin, and de Launay headed the list as interpreters of vignettes, the name of DAMBRUN (1741-1808) was comparatively thrown into the shade, and yet two of his larger prints would suffice to establish a reputation: the "Partie de wisch" in Moreau's second *Suite d'estampes*, and "le Calendrier" among Fragonard's illustrations for La Fontaine. Size, however, interfered occasionally with his technique, and while he failed with a few folio portraits, the almanacs of his patron were admirably suited to his particular aptitude. Being no more of an etcher than Queverdo was a burinist, he depended chiefly on Pélicier and Giraud le Jeune for the preparation of his plates.

The handsome borders round this pair testify to the decorative sense of Queverdo who, in like manner, ornamented most of his oval drawings. The originality of the "Nouvelles du bien-aimé" is open to doubt; its composition coincides too closely with Watteau's "Jeune Fille sortant du lit" to be accepted as an instance of great wits being of the same mind and conceiving different scenes on similar lines. To compare the two is not within everybody's reach, since Watteau's picture is lost and Mercier's engraving of it is exceedingly rare. The impression included in this collection has been inserted, as an extra print, in the copy of "L'Œuvre d'Antoine Watteau," published by de Julienne.

For workmanship and wit, the tail-pieces under each print are more remarkable than the main subjects. On the first Cupid has taken care to lift the bandage off his eyes in order to discharge the duties of postman: on the second Innocence, seeing Love asleep, strews his couch with flowers, and by contrast puts to shame a visitor whom Queverdo had allowed to interrupt a lady's slumbers in the most indiscreet manner imaginable. The pretty conceit of French prints was often held within the *fleuron*.

[1] See Grand Carteret's "Almanachs Français"—1896—or, better still, "les Almanachs illustrés du XVIIIme siècle" by Vt. de Savigny de Moncorps—1909—whose unrivalled collection of these bibliographic knick-knacks has been recently bequeathed to the Decorative arts Museum at the Louvre. The "Library catalogue of an English Amateur"—1893-1897—describes eighteen specimens in the possession of Lord Carnarvon, and reproduces some of the bindings, one of them painted *à la gouache* by Moreau le Jeune.

NICOLAS FRANÇOIS REGNAULT

298.

LE LEVER

Engraved by REGNAULT

Proof printed in colours.

STIMULATED by the success of his interpretation of "le Bain" after Baudouin (No. 3), REGNAULT painted a miniature as its companion and engraved it, to serve the same purpose as the former.

Although the original of "le Lever" has long been given to Baudouin, the "Journal de Paris," as far back as 1778, had identified it, when describing, among other objects of virtu, "a miniature by Regnault, painter and engraver," now in the Wallace collection, which corresponds exactly with this print. The conclusive reference, however, did not affect a reimpression of the latter over the name and date of "Baudouin 1731," a slip already mentioned in this catalogue.

The two compositions are admirably balanced, and Regnault's technique imparts to both a homogeneous appearance; yet the first holds its own and carries the prize.

On the back of this impression is written "Naudet, 1792": Naudet being a dealer who had the bad habit of inscribing his name on the best prints that passed through his hands.

LE LEVER

By and after N. F. Regnault

AUGUSTIN DE SAINT-AUBIN

(1736-1807)

THE earliest training of one of the leading artists of the century of vignettes was the best: the training received from Gabriel who wanted Augustin his brother to tread an ambitious path and to engrave historical subjects. With that purpose in view, vocation or no vocation, Augustin in 1755 had to join the workshop of Fessard, where, in spite of his unusual gifts, or because of them, he was employed as an assistant and his progress delayed. Laying aside whenever he could the drudgery of Caylus's antiques given him to interpret, he would sooner attend to address cards, book-plates, and programmes of court festivities, mere trifles raised almost to the rank of works of art by such draughtsmen as Cochin, Choffard, and Moreau.[1] He decorated Lagarde's "Journal of Music" for the royal children, embellished the labels of an apothecary at Rennes, produced a superb *ex-libris* for the Duc de la Rochefoucauld. There must have been more than ordinary merit to those scraps of paper, or Fessard would not have inscribed upon them his own conceited *direxit*. Their success was such that the Duc de Chevreuse, not knowing how to identify the drawers of a cabinet of natural history, commissioned to Augustin four friezes of animals, shells, birds, and antiques to be pasted on them. From that day, thanks to a magic power of infusing spirit into the tiniest tasks of his craft, he became the illustrator *par excellence* of collections for sale, of pictures, porcelains, and bronzes. When absorbed in more important work this partiality to minute or playful ornamentation never deserted him, and in 1788 he designed and engraved a new entrance ticket for the Comédie Italienne.

In the admirable *fleurons* for the Decameron after Gravelot he found a course of the highest instruction, the influence of which is obvious on a print for d'Argenville's "Voyage pittoresque de Paris." Having learnt all that Fessard was willing or capable to teach, he joined a more remarkable *atelier*, that of Laurent Cars. There he acquired the sparkling touch which was to be his characteristic as an etcher, and by tackling portraits he developed his wonderful manner of rendering the softness of the flesh. His Diderot after Greuze induced Cochin to present him to the Academy, by which he was unanimously received. On coming out of the

meeting Caffieri told him: "As it should not be said that you, of all candidates, "were exempt from black balls here is one I meant to drop in your ballot box . . . "and did not."

Between 1767 and 1771, when the art of the vignette was at its zenith, Saint-Aubin produced five miniature masterpieces after Boucher for Ovid's "Metamorphoses."[2] In a very different strain, and for the first time with his own address at the Hôtel de Cluny, he drew two sets, engraved by Duclos: one of six "Messenger boys"—the special avocation of little Savoyards in Paris—the other of six "Urchin's games," amusing in their way, tinged with local colour, but too refined, too closely related to the Cupids of cartouches and tail-pieces. The experiment sized the artist's powers for characterism. His were not the bold lines, the sturdy figuration which go far towards putting life and raciness into street cries and popular scenes. If he must seek inspiration in the open air it became obvious he had better adjourn to the boulevards, the ambulating Olympus of Parisian gods, the perennial fair of fashion and pleasure. As a result what plaudits greeted Augustin when, having shifted sketch-book and pencils between the then aristocratic Temple and the St. Antoine gate, he produced "la Promenade des remparts" and "les Portraits à la mode" (Nos. 309, 310). One step more, and in 1773, the year that marks the height of his success, he achieved a triumph with a double *chef-d'œuvre*, "le Bal paré" and "le Concert" (Nos. 304, 305), admirably translated on copper by Duclos. On both compositions, as on the preceding pair, he preserved for posterity four scenes of the social comedy under Louis XV which would otherwise have escaped history and disappeared along with the airs and graces of their actors.

His lot was a happy one. An earnest worker of a companionable disposition, a fair musician, blessed with one of those attractive eighteenth-century countenances to which a powdered wig gave a piquant and not unmanly expression, between amiable and fast, his good looks at twenty-eight helped him to win the heart of Nicole Godeau, a lovely girl of twenty-two. Her features are to be recognized in the prints labelled "la Baronne de . . ." and "l'Hommage réciproque"; her charming features which ten years later the ever-devoted husband revived in the brilliant "Soyez discret," as a companion to "Comptez sur mes serments," the image of his own youth (Nos. 301, 308, 299, 300).

At the same Salon where he sent the "Bal" and the "Concert" the artist exhibited a series of portraits. The success obtained with them determined their continued production at the bidding of editors of literature, travels, and memoirs. Celebrities of all times and of every order—532 in number—beginning with Homer and including Cicero: poets and warriors, King's mistresses, and divines emerged promiscuously from his pencil and his burin bearing a bright expression, in curious contrast with the wonted solemnity of conventional iconography; for Augustin could insert wit and malice even in the wigs of his subjects. As many as five effigies of Voltaire are due to him, four of Rousseau, three of Diderot, four of Louis XV, nine of Louis XVI, seven of Marie Antoinette. Having engraved in 1777 a Benjamin Franklin after Cochin—"very like, according to the 'Mercure de "France': a pleasing and picturesque work"—two years later he paired it with that of Washington. A note to the catalogue of 1779 says: "this print was "executed under Mr. Franklin's eyes after a likeness of the Commander-in-chief "of the American armies taken from life and agreeing with one brought back to "France by Mr. de la Fayette."

Mr. de la Live, amateur and court dignitary, having undertaken to engrave fifty medallions of the leading figures of the century of Louis XIV, and being disappointed with the work of Charpentier, had recourse to Saint-Aubin, who erased the heads and did them all over again "in the style of the noble author."[3] Then, by way of acknowledging the handsome emoluments received for this anonymous intervention, he etched a likeness of Madame de Letine, mother-in-law of his patron. The result was a wonder. In the words of Lady Dilke: "The cheerful old "age of the sitter handled as delicately as the years themselves had touched her, "the speaking eyes, the smiling lips, the very folds of her dress, her laces and furs "apparently exhaling the perfume of faded roses." The presentation on the part of the etcher could not be more complete, for the inscription "A. L. de la Live sculpsit" was supported by a discreet hint that the son-in-law had actually put his hand to this perfect gem as well as to the companion portrait of himself. Who could believe it?

The enormous demand for similar work drew Augustin away from the class of subject which before posterity was to build his reputation anew. Although the fine head of Necker after Duplessis and the medallions of Mariette and of Madame de Pompadour after Cochin, temper our regret that we should not have more "Promenades des remparts," more "Bals parés," yet what a pity he did not

reproduce more feminine countenances, and fewer likenesses of elderly men. For, with the eyes and fingers of a lover, Saint-Aubin was by instinct a woman's portraitist. "La Baronne" and "la Marquise" speak for that side of his talent which widens his glory. He never experienced the drawback of the engraver's craft, that of being regarded as somewhat of a subordinate performer who merely interprets the ideas of a composer whatever be the gifts displayed. He was indeed the Nanteuil of his day: a Nanteuil with a different process; instead of borrowing his models from this or that painter, he could steal them from nature and inscribe "ad vivum" on a number of prints.

His appointment as engraver to the Royal Library in place of Fessard was unfortunate for art, inasmuch as it became incumbent upon him to reproduce heaps of intaglios and old coins which, however finely executed, proved to be an encumbrance to his imaginative powers.

Then came the Revolution, interfering with all things, even with the pencil of exquisite draughtsmen. Who would recognize the virtuoso of the "Concert" and the "Bal paré" on the medals he designed for the Judges of the Court of appeal, for the Members of the Social Contract, and of the National Convention? Here and there, of course, the genuine artist reasserts himself, and if other craftsmen had only handled their revolutionary plates in anything like his style, the hack-work by which they had to live would not have yielded such wearisome results. But even Augustin's portraits began to take on a deadly monotony of mould in imitation of cameos, with their incessant repetitions of neat profiles—including a small one of Bonaparte in 1804, within the same oval border, bearing the same label. Individuality, grace, and personal accent gradually disappear; the supple talent once crippled never regains its spring. The artist out of his element laboured to decorate official diplomas and fraternity cards. As a supreme effort he illustrated with sixty-seven heads of kings and emperors a dull French history from Pharamond to Napoleon, issued in 1806, and including a few wretched drawings from the enfeebled hand of Moreau le Jeune, "wrecked from the same boat."[4]

Times were hard, commissions from amateurs a luxury of the past, and Saint-Aubin was growing old. He addressed repeated applications to Renouard[5] whom he supplied with 12mo portraits wholesale: "I have just been six weeks over "your little medallions, meanwhile my cook spends 600 livres every ten days.

"I do not expect you to raise my fees at the rate of the cost of living, but in "conscience you should at least treble them." In the summer of 1808 for the last time he begs the editor: "my suffocating fits are just as bad. You sent only "200 francs for July; can't you spare 300 this month?"

There is pathos in the priced catalogue of his effects, pictures, drawings, prints, medals, copper-plates, and engraver's tools sold after his death. A Stradivarius which in the days of his courtship had sighed and throbbed under his bow before the enraptured Nicole fetched 101 francs; 230 vignettes by Moreau and 750 by Cochin were knocked down at 36 and 24 francs respectively.

Duclos, Macret, Anselin, Blot, and Sergent, each one represented in this collection, were his best pupils. The latter, who interpreted in colours his fine portrait of Necker, aquatinted two lively little scenes (Nos. 306, 307) of which Augustin had somehow been guilty, and where an English title is meant—as Latin did at one time—to brave propriety.

It stands to the perennial credit of Messrs. de Goncourt to have exhumed from oblivion the names of the three Saint-Aubin brothers, Charles-Germain, Gabriel, and Augustin, when describing the eighteenth-century drawings collected in their "Maison d'un artiste." The complete works of Augustin—1,388 plates in all —as set aside by the artist himself for his own portfolio, are preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale.

[1] Amateurs should see at the Bibliothèque Nationale the miraculously pretty ticket of admission to the ball given in 1745 at Versailles for the Dauphin's wedding, "entrance door and steps on the left"; the finest flower dropped from Cochin's own cornucopia.

Choffard, who at one time made a speciality of visiting cards, designed the French East India Company's paper money, which eventually proved of less value than the engraving itself with its lovely framework of *rocaille*, lilies, and a shower of gold coins.

Moreau drew no end of *ex-libris*, crests, and trade addresses for a jeweller, a tailor, a master builder, and a clockmaker, for a chemist whom science directs towards a wounded soldier, for a drainage company, and for the aeronautic experiments of Charles and Robert.

[2] This superb edition in four volumes—one of the finest illustrated works of the century issued by Basan—contains 30 vignettes and 139 plates drawn by Boucher, Eisen, Gravelot, Moreau, and others, interpreted by Saint-Aubin, de Launay, Duclos, Helman, de Ghendt, Lemire, Masquelier, etc. Choffard drew and engraved the majority of the *fleurons* and *culs-de-lampe*.

[3] A. L. de la Live de Jully (1725-1779), financier, diplomatist, honorary member of the Academy, and art patron, says in the unpublished text for his *Hommes célèbres* that, having practised engraving since childhood, he undertook to etch himself all those portraits previously drawn for him in uniform size, and that he followed the manner of Van Dyck "though I may not have come up to the mark." With due credit

to the modesty of an amateur of quality, and in spite of Saint-Aubin's generous retouches, the whole set, intended merely for presentation to friends, is decidedly weak. In 1770 la Live went out of his mind and the famous collection he had formed "for the glory of France" was sold by his ward as a precaution. Diderot wrote to Falconnet: "He is raving mad. Who would ever have expected it? The reason given for "it, that he was too fond of his wife, is amusing."

4 Saint-Aubin did not want to have to inscribe the surnames given by old-fashioned history to each king, "the Wise, the Well-beloved, the Pious, the Idler, the Good-looking." "Since Cochin," he writes, "has suppressed most of them on his set, why should not I do likewise, not so much to save time, as to "avoid the bother of such trite legends."

5 A. A. Renouard (1765-1853), a publisher devoted to revolutionary ideas, but sensible enough to use all his influence in favour of the decree of *Brumaire* in the year II, which saved from destruction the masterpieces of art. His illustrated editions of classic literature and of history, issued at the dawn of the nineteenth century, kept the wolf from the door of many draughtsmen and engravers, waifs of a discarded school, who endeavoured to blend the old style with the new canons of art. The mark of a cock standing on an anchor adopted by Renouard symbolized the editor's vigilance as well as the confidence he inspired.

AU MOINS SOYEZ DISCRET

By and after A. DE SAINT-AUBIN

COMPTEZ SUR MES SERMENTS

By and after A. DE SAINT-AUBIN

299, 300.

AU MOINS SOYEZ DISCRET—COMPTEZ SUR MES SERMENTS

A pair engraved by the artist in 1789

First states.
Bocher, Nos. 406 and 407.

THE best known of all the works of Augustin de St. Aubin. The charming looks, the singularly happy and thoroughly French attitudes of the characters represented plead forgiveness for the entreaties exchanged between them and emphasized by hands exquisitely drawn. As portraits—for such they are—two most unusual compositions, in which the artist at fifty-three, in the full force of his powers, called forth his own image as a young gallant next to that of his wife, Louise Emilie, then forty-seven years of age, as she was in the bloom of her blonde beauty, blushing and proud of belonging to a handsome and spirited lover.

The criticism that as a portraitist St. Aubin confined himself too exclusively to profiles, that he used and abused medallions set within rectangular frames, hardly applies to figures which by common consent head the list and might enjoy the anonymity of genre subjects rather than suggest two family likenesses.

A pencil drawing of "Soyez discret," faintly coloured, once belonging to Messrs. de Goncourt, was bought for 18,500 francs by Mr. Mühlbacher, at whose sale Mr. Groult secured it for 22,500 francs. The master's first conception of it may be seen in a slighter sketch at the Louvre.

Not the least attraction of each print are the cameo-like *fleurons* on the tablet. Blindfolded Eros on the first walks straight to "a precipice he fails to see," as stated on the inscription; a flying Cupid on the second holds in one hand his bow, with the other "he carries off the rose," says the legend; the rose, no doubt, which the hero displays on his waistcoat.

The Salon catalogue of 1789 mentioned among the works by A. de St. Aubin "two companion half figures within oval borders" without any further particulars, but the subjects are identified by an advertisement in the "Mercure de France" of August of that year, quoting the respective titles: "Both prints are to be had "for 6 livres at the author's, 54 Rue des Prouvaires." Bocher describes four finished states of each: the first address being replaced by that of Berthet on the third, by that of Marel on the fourth.

Bourcard harps as usual on modern reimpressions from the old copper-plates, some in black, some in imitation of red chalks; Lady Dilke blunders egregiously on this score: "The charming figure crying 'be discreet' is most popular of all in "the coloured version. The existence of these coloured versions, the beauty of which "is scarcely enhanced by this treatment . . . reflected itself in the eager pursuit by "engravers of new processes." That theoretic art critics should be apt to slip the moment they launch into original appreciations is a failing which helps to set off the efficiency of instinct, scent, and experience over and above a stock of documents, dates, and anecdotes; but that the author of an exhaustive monograph on French engravers and draughtsmen should take in earnest some modern specimens of "Soyez discret" and "Croyez à mes serments," atrociously daubed with colours, to the extent of tracing to their success the development of colour prints, is a record of candid incompetence.

The superb impressions before us, bearing the mark A.F.D., come from the sale of Mr. Ambroise Firmin-Didot (1794-1875), a descendant of the great firm of editors and a member of the Institute. His fine collection, almost entirely formed by Mr. A. Danlos, ranked next to those of Count de Behague, Mr. C. Bayard, and Mr. Mühlbacher, whose respective marks are quoted by Bourcard as denoting a famous provenance, a high standard of quality.

301, 302.

LOUISE ÉMILIE BARONNE DE * * *—ADRIENNE SOPHIE MARQUISE DE * * *

A pair engraved by the artist in 1779

Second states.
Bocher, Nos. 7 and 173.

PORTRAITS of pretty women, the great attraction of English prints, the exception among the French, which boasts of too many glabrous, periwigged, double-chinned countenances of men, form a small but select group in the works of Augustin de St. Aubin. "This cosy corner of respectable beauties," says Bourcard, is headed by "two handsome companion profiles with allegorical borders "and rhymes, appropriate to the accomplishments of both ladies," as mentioned in the Salon catalogue of July 1779, under No. 286.

Opinions are divided as to the identity of the fair sitters. In both ovals Edmund de Goncourt descries the beautiful features of the artist's wife, Louise Nicole Godeau, presented with a different head-dress under two fancy names, but easily recognizable if compared with the attractive heroine of "Soyez discret" (No. 299). Somewhat arbitrarily other critics give the name of Madame de Breteuil to "la Baronne," of Madame de Boufflers to "la Marquise."[1] Bocher, whose authority is decisive, grants the benefit of the anonymity to the second, commenting as follows on the first: "We behold here in all probability the likeness of Mme. de "St. Aubin as reproduced in 'l'Homage réciproque' (No. 308) and paired with the "portrait of the artist himself. We know, moreover, by Augustin's marriage "certificate, that his bride's name was Louise, a circumstance which confirms our "opinion owing to the inscription 'Louise Êmilie.' The features represented here "are of a woman in the ripeness of her beauty and as, when her husband drew this "oval, Mme. de St. Aubin, born in 1742, was thirty-seven, her age agreed with "that of the lady in the print."

Surely those attributes and legends which cannot have been apportioned indiscriminately between each image must count for something in the identification. Under "la Baronne" everything points to love and beauty; a wreath of roses, a sprig of myrtle, a flaming torch, a bow, a quiver, and Venus's own apple with the address: "To the fairest," and the couplet: "Cupid, as he met her, thought he

"beheld his mother—all who saw her since had Love's eyes." The Louise of the artist deserved the compliment in real life, but as she was not supposed to wear blue stockings, to be a musician, a book-worm, or to write poetry, any reference to literature and the arts would have been inappropriate. Yet upon the tablet under "la Marquise" we find a mandolin, an inkstand, a miniature, a sketch-book, and a few volumes of "light poems, songs, and epigrams." The rhyme reads: "Earnest or "frolicsome as it may suit, tender or hard, Apollo is her master, Cupid her slave." From what we know of St. Aubin's home life, the disposition of his wife was not so complex, nor had Apollo any claim upon her time. With apologies to de Goncourt one may well conclude that the companion oval holds the profile of another woman presenting hardly any resemblance with "la Baronne," with "Soyez discret," and "l'Homage réciproque."

Without dwelling on the possible sitters of "two lovely portraits, more sought "after than any in the whole French school," Portalis and Beraldi place on record that only two etchings of them are known: at the Bibliothèque Nationale and at Baron E. de Rothschild's, that only one pair of white tablet proofs exists which passed from the Mühlbacher collection to that of Mrs. Burns and that, apart from those four exceptional impressions, the only state before the artist's address under his signature is extremely rare. Two more states follow: one with the address "Rue des Mathurins," the other with "Rue Thérèse." The latter subdivision with reference to "la Marquise" has escaped the attention of Bocher, who, however, points out a difference between the two etchings of "la Baronne," one without any letters, the other bearing St. Aubin's "del et sculp." According to him the white tablet exists only on the proof impression of "la Marquise," while its companion bearing title and rhymes is, as a matter of fact, the second state.

[1] Marie de Beauvau Craon, Marquise de Boufflers, one of the wittiest women of her time, almost a professional Epicurean, played a prominent part at the little court of King Stanislaus Leczinsky at Lunéville. Voltaire sent her a copy of the "Henriade" with the following allusion to the mistress of Henry IV: "Had "you lived in the days of Gabrielle, I know not what might have been said of you, but nobody would have "spoken of her." She composed her own epitaph: "Here lies in profound peace a pleasure loving lady who, keeping on the safe side, secured her paradise in this world." She died in 1787. "Short and sweet" her motto.

LOUISE ÉMILIE BARONNE DE * * *

By and after A. DE SAINT-AUBIN

L.. L.. BARONNE DE * * *

L'Amour en la voyant crut voir sa mere un jour
Et tout ce qui la voit a les yeux de l'Amour.

ADRIENNE SOPHIE MARQUISE DE * * *

By and after A. DE SAINT-AUBIN

PRINX OPHIE
A. S. MARQUISE DE. . .
Sage ou folle à propos, tendre, enjouée ou grave
Apollon eſt ſon maitre et l'Amour ſon Eſclave

303.

DERNIÈRE HEURE DE LA BARONNE REBECQUE

Engraved by the artist in 1780

The etching.
Bocher, No. 232.

BESIDES this exceedingly rare etching, Bocher describes two states of the print, one bearing merely the lady's name, the other mentioning "her last hour" to explain in what circumstances so uncommon a portrait was taken. A rhyme on the border states how her virtue, reason, and character never for one moment forsook her and asks: "Why should such a friend be taken from us when "her gifts were most appreciated?"

If Augustin de St. Aubin was actually summoned to a sitter's death-bed, what further evidence is needed of his success? The likeness is pathetic, not ghastly; handled as delicately as a lingering illness seems to have affected the emaciated but still pleasing features of the Baroness de Rebecque (1744-1780) at thirty-six years of age. Although almost all her life an invalid, she carried on to the very end a literary propaganda against the Encyclopædists. Whilst St. Aubin drew her she dictated to Palissot the scheme of a philosophical play, and being no longer able to write, yet she had the energy to explain how the principal scene should be developed, and what allusions were to be made to Voltaire, Rousseau, and Diderot.

A heliogravure of the second state of this print is given in Lady Dilke's "French Engravers and Draughtsmen" with the following comment: "amongst "St. Aubin's portraits there are not one, nor two, but many which may claim to "be *chefs-d'œuvre* of delicacy and truth."

The subject before us recalls to mind Van Dyck's pathetic picture of Sofonisba Anguissola as she lay dying, now in the Gualino collection at Cereseto.

304, 305.

LE BAL PARÉ—LE CONCERT

A pair engraved by Antoine-Jean Duclos in 1774

The etching and third state of the first: the first, second, and third states of the second.

Coats of arms of Mr. de Vilmorien and of the Countess de St. Brisson respectively. Bocher, Nos. 402 and 403.

AUGUSTIN DE ST. AUBIN transmitted more successfully than to any other pupil some of his clear, crisp, and sparkling touch to A. J. DUCLOS (1742-?), who handled endless vignettes like veritable prints, and attracted special attention by translating to copper the two finest compositions of his master. Colour, brilliance, and charm, science of composition and virtuosity of execution are combined on both plates, the merit of which is equally shared by draughtsman and engraver: one having instilled into the other the quintessence of his refinement and wit. A huge portfolio of proofs which turned up in Paris in 1917 as a surprise among amateurs, and is now in the collection of Baron du Taisne, contains almost the entire works of Duclos, and shows him to have excelled as an etcher; many of his preparations being finished and signed by the best burinists. He also drew in the style of Gravelot several illustrations of theatrical plays.

❖ ❖ ❖

Soon after "la Promenade des Remparts" and "les Portraits à la mode" St. Aubin made his mark with two views of the fashionable world under Louis XV. De Goncourt devotes to them one of his most florid passages. "In summer, after "dinner, lounging on rococo armchairs in a semicircle, a few men standing, "the exquisitely dressed company is assembled in the concert room. The "ceiling represents a nebulous firmament peopled with playful Cupids strewing "roses and day-dreams. Silk curtains gathered up in flounces and held on canopies "set with musical trophies allow the sun to stream through the windows. Four "marble busts of ivy-crowned goddesses smile between the pilasters. Tossing her "fan, a young lady sings to the accompaniment of the harpsichord, supported by "the chirping of a flute, the sigh of a violin, the throb of a 'cello. Presently the "harp, not yet a mere orchestral instrument, will follow with a thrilling solo.

"A dandy bends down officiously to turn the pages of the score. 'If music be the "'food of love, play on: give them excess of it.'

"In winter another drawing-room, a square one, all pier glasses, carved and "painted panels. Hanging from the scroll-work of the ceiling, five rock-crystal "chandeliers pour mellow candlelight heightened by more candles on wall-brackets. "The clock set against a mirror may well strike the hour; five fiddlers on a tribune "deaden the rustle of time; at the far end of the apartment a bevy of ladies hum "and buzz like bees. Under the critical glances of inevitable chaperons four couples "in the centre go through the steps and glidings, the veerings and curtseys of "the German, as taught by Mr. Dubois of the Opera. Instead of watching their "evolutions a young woman turns round to catch the gossip exchanged by two "men. A handsome late comer in a pelisse is received by the host, a portly, "bespangled old gentleman. Already a dowager adjourns to the sumptuous buffet, "glimpses of which are caught through the dining-room door. A cloak lies on a "seat.[1]

"No crowding, excitement, or bustle disturb the serenity of these small and "early parties of friends, bid to watch a quadrille danced by eight young people or "to hear a debutante sing a song of La Borde, assisted by a quartette of dilettanti. "An air of well-bred relaxation pervades both concert and ball, attended as if they "were a feature of life's business or a duty of idle mankind. Bows are exchanged "from the four corners of each room as between members of a set where everybody "is somebody, knows his place, and adheres to his precedence. Both entertainments "lull the happy unconcern of a society over which reigns Louis XV, the well "beloved."

What fineness of perception was needed to portray this pretty nonsense and to set down for posterity the sunniest hour of aristocratic leisure? A little more music, a few more minuets, and in less than ten years the same reception rooms altered to suit a stiffer style of decoration will open their windows on a stormy future. With less art and in a more superficial degree Lavreince's "Assemblées au salon, au concert" coincide with the end of the feast.

Portalis wrote: "The distinction and elegance of drawing-rooms are the real "element of A. de St. Aubin. He introduces us first to a 'bal paré' attended by "smartly dressed ladies, by gentlemen attired in the latest style, dancing the last "figure of a minuet, giving their whole mind to it, while the portly Farmer-general "welcomes a guest who has not yet removed her pelisse. He takes us next to the "brilliant concert given by a grand Seigneur who, seated next to the musicians, "listens spell-bound to the virtuoso. The company is wrapped up in silent attention, "except for two lovers, who in the joy of meeting, whisper a few words.

"Admirable compositions, engraved with the greatest skill by Duclos."

But since, contrary to an old French adage, all men of wit do not necessarily agree, Mr. Courboin in his essays on "la gravure Française" finds fault with this

pair of prints. Having remarked that throughout the second half of the eighteenth century the engravers' orchestra lacked a conductor and showed signs of exhaustion, he sets up as standard specimens of the grand manner under the Regent, Bossuet's portrait after Rigaud and "l'Embarquement pour Cythère" by Tardieu after Watteau. Turning then to those scenes of fashionable life which felt least of all the influence of scholastic theories and proved to be such favourable ground to a later generation of engravers, he picks out the "Jeu du pied-de-bœuf" by Cochin after de Troy "a work carried out in the best tradition, so well balanced, luminous, "and pure that the onlooker forgets before it the performer's touch to think only of "the general effect as the outcome of true art. Then the decadence begins: engravers "step gradually from style into calligraphy, from grace into insipidity, and their "thin technique, by claiming more and more attention, does not prove to be the "criterion of perfect prints. Thus in the 'Retour du bal' the 'fine burin' of "Beauvarlet calls for the compliments usually paid to acrobatic feats, and which "might be turned, somehow, into the most equitable criticism of a work of art. . . .

"The 'Bal' and the 'Concert' show the irremediable evolution towards engraving "on a small scale—*la gravure en petit*. To judge them rightly all commercial and "sentimental quotations must be dismissed along with the literature of Mr. de "Goncourt; both plates should be viewed as one looks at the illustrations of an "octavo volume. At an average distance, to the spectator blessed with a good "eyesight, they will appear to be confused; within one yard they are wellnigh "illegible. Exquisite documents as scenes of manners; otherwise, more like "overgrown vignettes than genuine prints, they belong to that class of pictures on "which the critical opinions of the time are worth quoting.

"The Dialogues on painting published in 1773, the very year when St. Aubin's "original 'Bal' and 'Concert' were exhibited, inveighs against draughtsmen and "engravers given to diminutive work. An Italian prelate and an English nobleman "air their amenity and humour at the Salon, under the escort of the well-known "Remi, a cautious art dealer. 'Milord,' who is outspoken, spares neither St. Aubin, "'whose talent is not likely to thrive on the meagre and dry handling of his tiny "'cuts and small sketches,' nor Cochin 'who has some pretty conceits, a few happy "'compositions, but who distorts everything owing to a faulty transition from fore "'to background. . . . Being only able to work on a small scale, he does not know "'how to impart character to his figures which are all alike. . . . As far as engraving "'is concerned nothing but drawing and sentiment really matters, the rest has "'superficial merit. Let your modern artists try to feel more than to furbish: they "'need not imagine that petty exactitude and the cold act of cutting designs on "'metal compensate for vigorous expression.' Having touched the sore spot, "Milord, by way of conclusion, makes one bundle of the engravers, another of the "draughtsmen. A certain knack, some cross hatching, and gloss stand to the "credit of the first: a little grace and taste are the assets of the second."

With all deference to him, Mr. Courboin does not seem to lay sufficient stress on the fact that the Dialogues on painting raked up for the occasion bore the mention "at the Academy's expense" in the figurative sense, and that professional spite ran through their immoderate utterances. Far more instructive and convincing is Mr. Courboin's quotation from a chapter of Cochin's re-issue of Bosse's "Traité de gravure," where the eminent vignettist, whom Diderot considered to be the first draughtsman of the day, maintains that the excellence of a print wrought on a small scale depends on its etching, that it must suggest a sketch, and that too much elaboration deprives it of its main attraction, a witty and bold touch: that a few artistic strokes go far towards conveying prettiness and even passion, more so than the attention given to the eyeballs, eyelids, nostrils, and other *minutiae* fit only to be admired by the crowd.

The two original drawings, exhibited at the Louvre in 1773, reproduced the ballroom of Mr. de Vilmorien's country house at Marly, the residence in recent years of Mr. Victorien Sardou, and the music room in the town house of Prince de Rohan Soubise, now given over to the National Archives,[2] where Gluck conducted his first concert. Both prints were issued in the following year at 9 livres by Chereau, the editor, who signed the dedication of the first, while the second had been signed by Duclos.

A hitherto unknown, unlettered state of the "Concert," recently discovered at the Bibliothèque Nationale among a lot of engravings of musical instruments, is two centimetres shorter on the left, half a centimetre on the right: two figures, one door, and half a chair having been omitted on the plate to which subsequent additions appear to have been made, much to the advantage of the composition and its shape.

To four states of "le Bal" and three of "le Concert" described by Bocher, Mr. Danlos adds two of the first, three of the second, one of them represented in this collection by the impression of "le Concert" before letters and coat of arms, but with border and drapery. Of surpassing rarity in each case is the first finished state before the border. A pair before letters with the border is permanently framed in the print room of the Bibliothèque Nationale. Messrs. de Goncourt call "desirable" the state before Chereau's address, before the royal privilege, and before the mention of King's engraver after the artist's name. On the etching of "le Bal" the light thrown by the wall brackets on the left is not so vivid.

A test of quality with the impressions of "le Concert" is the degree of crispness and distinctness of the minute decorations drawn upon the harpsichord, which suggests Gillot's work on the finest *vernis* Martin furniture.

Two impressions of the desirable state which at the Raifé sale in 1864 had fetched 61 francs, realized 1,050 francs at the Behague sale, when eighteenth-century

prints asserted their return to favour. In 1880 the etching of "le Concert" from the Wasset collection was knocked down at 6,200 francs, and in the year following the sum of 12,000 francs was bidden for a set of the first finished state from the Mühlbacher portfolio. The pair has ranked since then among the masterpieces of the school, not that its artistic excellence needed a stock exchange backing, but because to "the general" the proof of the pudding will ever be in the eating. Bourcard wastes much space to warn collectors against some copies stupendously engraved by Magnier and printed on old paper, "which can only be detected by "comparing them to the originals, some of them carefully heightened with colours. The "effect," concludes the critic, "is attractive, though the attempt be merely a "fanciful one." Who could accept a hand-coloured engraving as the work of St. Aubin?

[1] "Bal Paré," essentially an eighteenth-century expression, did not necessarily mean a large or a "grand" ball, but rather a reception where guests would be expected to wear evening dress: the etiquette of French society in those days as well as at present being far less strict, less on its p's and q's, than the English.

[2] The most sumptuous specimen of a French private residence in the eighteenth century.

LE BAL PARÉ

By A. J. Duclos. After A. de Saint Aubin

LE CONCERT

By A. J. Duclos. After A. de Saint-Aubin

Le
A Madame La Comteſſe
Concert
de Briſſon

A. de Saint-Aubin.

306, 307.

FIRST COME, BEST SERVED—THE PLACE TO THE FIRST OCCUPIER

A pair engraved by Antoine Louis François Sergent in 1786

Third states.
Bocher, Nos. 404 and 405.

"SOMEWHAT broad," says Bourcard, "but sought after. Rare in bistre."

The English title of both garret scenes was intended to outwit a censor who might take into his official head to trace the whereabouts of the publisher in Paris. The "Grove and Green Plot" (Nos. 252, 253) are but another instance of a dodge which must have been easily seen through when, as in this case, the cat was let out of the bag by the initials "A.d.S.A." on one side and the half name "Ser" on the other.

The imitation of A. de St. Aubin's Indian ink sketches has been skilfully carried out by the engraver.

308.

L'HOMMAGE RÉCIPROQUE

A pair engraved by LÉONARD GAULTIER, printed in colours

First states.
Bocher Nos. 410 and 411.

THIS pair of stipples must have afforded an unlooked-for diversion to customers who knew GAULTIER at the Notary's House, Rue de l'Arbre Sec, opposite Rue Bailleul, as an unpretending dealer of sundry revolutionary prints, the "Proclamation of Man's rights," the "Storming of the Bastille." Himself an engraver, he had brought forth the "Charm of fraternity," and "Philosophy discovering truth," when the possibilities of his taste and intuition were suddenly evinced by the interpretation of "l'Hommage réciproque," two wash drawings handled by St. Aubin in a style broader than usual. The successful experiment and the attractive theme, however, do not seem to have enticed Gaultier, alias GAUTHIER, out of his groove, for he went back to a ponderous set of portraits of surgeons and oculists for hospital consumption. Portalis and Beraldi quote no dates after his name.

Painters in those days had the good habit of painting their wives, provided they were pretty, under some conventional allegory or title. In several compositions of St. Aubin, Louise Nicole Godeau, daughter of the butler of Count de Caylus,[1] appears as the favourite model of a loving husband. She rises to fame in the alluring *déshabillé* of "Soyez discret" (No. 299), she assumes with dignified grace the *rôle* of the Baronne (No. 301), she sits pencil in hand before an easel, as if the mutual hommage of a portrait were exchanged between her and Augustin, who must sit to her in his turn. Here, on the plate printed in colours, her fine profile stands out, so do her dark eyes, dark eyebrows; her beautiful fair, frizzy hair falls on the neck curled after the fashion of *flambeaux d'amour*—love torches. The ruching of a muslin cape half reveals a statuesque form, a white rose complexion hardly ever tried by the sun of her native south. What arms, what hands! The adorable creature impersonates the genuine eighteenth-century beauty, charming and *piquante*, unartificial and gay.

The artist, who portrays himself as a sculptor engaged on his wife's bust, has done justice to his own good looks. Later states of each print are inscribed with

feeble but affectionate quatrains. Under the first: "While you're away, dear "de Lorville, I can finish your picture: to catch your likeness love will guide my "brush"; under the second: "The more I see her, the more I seem to burn: let "me vie with her brush. Her features set in my soul shall be reproduced by this "chisel."

The prints are very rare in colours, before the address and the rhymes. They were also printed in black, and in bistre, and in imitation of red chalk.

[1] Having fought when seventeen years of age at Malplaquet, the Count de CAYLUS (1692-1765), grand nephew of Mme. de Maintenon, left off soldiering to devote himself to science, to letters, and the antique. An Academician, archaeologist, painter, architect, and musician, he exercised during the early part of the century an almost despotic influence over every branch of art about which he knew more than any other amateur of his day, though we may be sure that Cochin says no more than the truth when he avers that "Caylus, if he had given a hasty judgement, was loth to retract or modify it—a usual weakness with critics." The seriousness with which he took himself might be expected of a man who had sat on the knees of Louis XIV, but the sense of his own importance was no hindrance to those touching relations with Watteau which are the consecration of his life.

An etcher of no mean excellence, he copied the grotesques of Leonardo and surprised Europe by his reproduction of the treasures of the so-called royal cabinet and of Crozat's portfolio of drawings. His works now at the Bibliothèque Nationale fill four folio volumes, every example of 3,200 plates being faced by its counterproof. Especially brilliant are his renderings of Bouchardon's "Cries of Paris." Of his invention was a print called "The meeting of curio dealers," a skit on past and future auction sales, where pictures are inspected by donkeys.

Caylus, the star customer of all the art dealers of Europe, devoted his wealth to collections of antiquities which he handed over to the State. He gave his labour and intelligence to their description and did much to raise the general level of taste. As his style of engraving was broad, and as he professed a decided objection to overfinished drawings and a marked preference for what he called an artist's first thought, the sudden demand for sketches was ascribed to his example.

A quarrel with the Encyclopædists, who had excluded him from their list of authorities, probably because he represented the old generation, whose teachings had cleared the way for theirs, embittered the last years of his life. In the Salon of 1765 Diderot congratulates himself and others on having been delivered from "the most cruel of amateurs," who had dealt with him as insolently but more frankly than he with Caylus.

The lofty ambitions and the indefatigable activity of his life sustained him throughout the lingering agony of a mortal illness "giving his figure a consistent dignity and consequence, of which," writes Lady Dilke, "there is no example amongst the many society people who followed in his footsteps." Le Beau says: "He knew he could not recover, yet he neither interrupted his studies nor his calls on savants and artists, "inspiriting their works as he was slowly dying. Carried by his servants, he seemed to leave a shred of his "life wherever he went."

"Les Amateurs d'autrefois," by Clement de Ris in 1877, contains an entertaining chapter on this prototype of the leading eighteenth-century art patrons.

309, 310.

LA PROMENADE DES REMPARTS DE PARIS—TABLEAU DES PORTRAITS À LA MODE

A pair engraved by Pierre François Courtois in 1760

First state of the first and second states of the pair.
Bocher, Nos. 378 and 382.

IN their unstinted admiration for these two pictures of well-bred and gay Parisians out for an airing, Portalis and Beraldi almost lose sight of COURTOIS (1736-1763), whom they are content to credit with both plates, without any reference to the training and work of so promising an engraver cut off at twenty-seven years of age. La Chavignerie merely says that Courtois, who interpreted Boucher's "Venus and Æneas," distinguished himself with a pair of "Promenades" and a few vignettes after Gravelot.

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At every significant period of history, when the inward and outward characteristics of a people undergo a process of renovation, a man is especially endowed and sent forth by Providence to preserve a graphic evidence of the ways and moods of his contemporaries for the benefit of posterity. The artistic evolution of the St. Aubin brothers may be quoted as an example in point.

No sooner had the bent of Augustin's talent asserted itself than he too, like Gabriel, sought inspiration out of doors. His early works, reproducing a festival at St. Cloud, urchins at play, the Savoyard commissionaires, a Christmas toy-shop, testify to that choice, though the young artist does not seem somehow to have felt at ease with rowdy characters or popular excitements and betrayed a preference for the lavender of life. By dint of experiments he concluded that the streets would suit him well enough, provided he took the right bearings of Paris on the sunny side of leisure. The market or the slums were no field for his powers of observation: he must go to the boulevards, the broad walks laid upon the ramparts of demolished fortifications, and transformed into a regular panorama of pretty women, smart idlers, and fine feathers: an ambulant sort of vanity fair, for the sake of which the dull Tuileries Gardens were being gradually deserted. When his fastidious pencil moved thither and brought forth the "Portraits à la mode" and "la Promenade

des remparts," French society could reckon on a new chronicler of its graces and its sins, the forerunner of Debucourt.

How lively and spirited these two revues, staged between the St. Antoine gate and the Temple, on a Thursday, no doubt, the fashionable day, judging by the parade of cabriolets, *vis-à-vis*, gala barouches of which the window sashes are raised and lowered in the exchange of formal salutations. What stir and bustle in the avenues enlivened by a typical St. Aubin gathering of belles and beaux, big-wigs, officers, and abbés. One of them who has jumped off his drag—"diable" it was called—beckons to a lady driving by in her painted and gilt coach. Raised on her heels, the dainty flower-girl charges a Thursday price for her nosegays. Intrigues and assignations thrive in the foreground: a clownery on trestles is watched by a simpler crowd at the far end.

The great attraction of the "Promenade" is the Café Gaussin, renowned for its punch and its orchestra, its wide casements, and sheltered porch enwreathed with Chinese lanterns, hoisting as hatchment a rose. Customers bent on killing half an hour between a gossip and a drink display unconsciously the unrestraint and mimicry of the time. Walkers move slowly on: an occasional *grisette*, the daughter of love and the devil, provokingly pretty, boldly young, hangs on the arm of a soldier, or, waving artfully her fan, ogles right and left. A beggar grinds the crank of a plaintive hurdy-gurdy.

Courtois, the engraver, something of a poet, has set his name to the involved and sententious rhymes pointing under each composition to the inanity of aping fops and admiring the whims of the day: "Stolid wealth from her coach hardly "glances at poverty; the financier puts on semi-regal airs. Next to frivolity on a "prancing steed, to scornful prudery and deceitful coquetry, the sage on foot passes "by unnoticed. Such human discrepancies recreate me, let's watch them from afar: "it's the fashion now and has been at all times; a fool was he who started it, "unwise is he who shuns it."

The original bistre drawing of the "Promenade," so minutely finished for the benefit of the engraver that the men portrayed are actually made to wear their swords on the right side, appeared in the 'sixties at Antwerp and subsequently passed from the la Beraudière collection to that of Mr. H. Josse, at whose sale it fetched 14,500 francs. Mr. Destailleur had a pencil sketch for it, signed and dated 1760. Messrs. de Goncourt mention a set of partial studies for the whole composition, as well as one for the "Portraits," where the gentleman leaning on a stick gives his arm to a lady.

Of the "Portraits," the Bibliothèque Nationale has a first plate with the remark in the handwriting of St. Aubin: "This plate could not be used and was "begun over again by Courtois." The faces are not the same as on the final impression, the *arlequin* show on the left is differently arranged, the carriages file off in another direction, and a hilly perspective forms the background.

Bocher mentions two etchings reproducing separate groups from both scenes The first bears the names in scratched letters "St. Marks" on the right, and of "Aug. de St. Aubin" on the left, with the inexplicable date 1734, two years before the artist's birth. It shows the man in a three-cocked hat walking arm-in-arm with the two ladies from the "Promenade" and another personage leaning from a carriage, patting the chin of a girl who offers him a bouquet. The second, inscribed "W. Marks" and "Aug. de St. Aubin inv. et del" represents the lady who has her hand on the shoulder of a little girl in the "Portraits à la mode"; two men sit on rush chairs, another points with his stick to a group on the right.

In July 1761 the "Mercure de France" advertised both "pretty prints" as sold by Mme. Chéreau at the Golden Pillar, rue St. Jacques. Paul Lacroix in his "XVIIIme siècle, Institutions, usages," etc., gives two woodcut replicas by Huyot of each composition.

"Rare plates, much sought after," write Portalis and Beraldi, "only excep-"tionally met before letters." "Extremely curious and in great demand," says Bourcard.

A drawing by Ch. N. Cochin, included in the Mühlbacher collection under the title of "Promenade des remparts de Paris," differs entirely from that by St. Aubin.

GABRIEL DE SAINT-AUBIN

311, 312.

BALLET DANSÉ À L'OPÉRA—LA GUINGUETTE

A pair engraved by Pierre François Basan in 1761

The etching of the first by G. de St. Aubin and the second states of the pair.
Coat of arms of the Duc de la Vallière.

GERMAIN DE SAINT-AUBIN, born in 1696, embroiderer and trimmer to the King, and therefore entitled to wear a coat of fine cloth with gold buttons, left no worldly goods to his fifteen children. Two of them, Gabriel and Augustin, riding roughshod over the paternal craft were called and chosen by art; two more, Louis and Charles-Germain, heard the same call and answered it in a measure, one as a china decorator at Sèvres, the other as a designer of silk patterns, monograms, and ornamental plates, termed by him "papilloneries humaines."

Fortunately for us Gabriel de SAINT-AUBIN (1724-1780), after leaving the *ateliers* of Jeaurat and of Boucher, was unfortunate in his repeated competitions for the Academy prize. Had he succeeded, and had he been trained in Rome as an historical painter, one of the most original of French draughtsmen would have been led astray.

Probably from disappointment he renounced all allegiance to classical routine and made game of school traditions. Slipping into what he called a brand new skin—*peau neuve*—setting up his own little gods away from the beaten path of artists, he searched Paris for subjects suited to that Bohemian power of observation which was to turn him into the most vivid and gifted reporter ever known. In sensational events, in military pageants, and court functions he saw no opportunity for witty characterization. Holiday-making in the suburbs, a fair, the inauguration of a monument, a fire, a private view at the Salon, the latest ballet, the interior of a milliner's shop, Mesmer's magnetic experiments, and the crowd of smart idlers sitting, walking, flirting, or watching a water-cart in the Tuileries Gardens,[1] such were the sights that appealed to his pencil. At great art sales he covered the blank spaces of his catalogues with minute sketches of pictures, statues, and *bric-à-brac*, snapshotted between the rise and fall of the hammer. Should the bidding drag, he would jot down a caricature of the auctioneer, the profile of a buyer, the silhouette of a pretty woman in the room, and find time to scribble the prices fetched, to correct

an attribution or a provenance, to mention that a Lancret was *très beau*, to qualify the state of such a print as unknown, to explain how a Chardin still-life was framed, and even to add a rhyme or a comment on the proceedings. These booklets, filled with cameo-like illustrations no higher than the printed description of the corresponding object, no wider than the margins, exhibit the artist's unique aptitudes more than any other work of his. The outlines of each tiny drawing are so neat, and the respective characteristics so distinct, that a Van Dyck or a Boucher, a Pajou or a Houdon, an antique jewel, or a Sèvres bowl can be recognized at a glance. Most wonderful of all, the catalogue of the Mariette sale; a miniature document of identifications and criticism, as well as a humorous record of one of the most memorable auctions of the century.[2]

Exhausted by a feverish monomania to keep graphic records of the daily excitements of Paris, and to live in the streets, he forgot every personal care.[3] Five days before his death he had to be rescued from the abject disorder of his rooms in the Rue de Beauvais, and be carried to the house of his brother Germain, whose note on an album of drawings: "A pity Gabriel should have utterly "disregarded order and cleanliness," was borne out by the police report that "unless the few goods and chattels left by the deceased be tidied up, it will be "impossible to make an inventory."[4]

His life and character are summed up as follows in a genealogical tree of the St. Aubin family since 1601: "Although Gabriel took up painting as a profession "and drew at all times and places, he did not get through one half of his talent. "Erudite, eccentric, and unwashed, a bit of a philosopher and a lunatic, luckily a "bachelor. Left no end of sketches in bad condition." The fact is he could elicit from the paper such wonderful chiaroscuro effects that his engraved works may be likened to Rembrandt etchings highly seasoned with Gallic jest. Etching, the process of the devil and of patience, was constantly in his mind's eye as he broadly pencilled those painter's drawings of his, glimpses of dreams, defying through their intentional indecision not only an average burin, but the most skilled needle. That is why, with very few exceptions, he was bound to be his own interpreter on the copper, regardless of practical considerations, and as he only took a limited number of impressions from his plates, not the least puzzling feature of a whimsical existence is how the artist managed to scrape along. His prints, the cynosure and joy of amateurs, are so rare they neither admit of much fastidious iconophily, nor of hair-splitting over states: they must be snatched and treasured as one occasionally finds them.

In his "Œuvre gravé de Gabriel de Saint-Aubin"—the most thorough and readable *catalogue raisonné* that ever was—Dacier enumerates fifty-one etchings by him in all "as accidents or happy chances in the artist's fitful career over a lapse "of twenty-five years or so." No more than ten impressions of each are known to-day. They derive a threefold interest from their haphazard production, from the

popular subjects that inspired them and from an unparalleled liberty of execution. "Gabriel's prints differ in sentiment from those by Fragonard, Cochin, Moreau le "Jeune, as they do in technique, and one must go back to Callot to find in the "history of original French engravings a similar magic in the distribution of "diversiform light." To Gabriel a copper-plate was like a sheet of paper upon which his needle could run instead of a pencil, without the least concern for shining effects or for the careful work aimed at in schools. "His etchings are the sketches "of a dauber of genius."

"There is no honour like that of being useful to mankind" is written in his own hand under the delineation of an unsubmersible boat experimented by de Bernières on the Seine in 1776. The Utopias of his generous soul were in advance of 1789 and of submarines.

❖ ❖ ❖

BASAN (1723-1797), trained as an engraver first by his uncle Fessard, then by Daullé, adopted their respective get-rich-quick principles, became familiar with the courses of profitable advertisement, and devoted his energy to trade as publisher and art expert. Having bought a stock of prints, he opened an *atelier* for young burinists, whose plates he occasionally signed.[5] To quicken the demand for Dutch genre pictures he established a connection with Amsterdam and London, thanks to the invaluable patronage of Mariette and the support of Wille. With a selection of "one hundred pleasing subjects and landscapes after the leading masters of the "Low Countries and France, engraved by François Basan or under his supervision," he inaugurated in 1760 the business of a regular print contractor, whose goods were soon to be distributed all over Europe.

In partnership with an excellent engraver, Lemire, he brought out among other library editions one of the most harmoniously beautiful books of the century, Ovid's "Metamorphoses," on which Lemire himself, St. Aubin, Longueil, Simonet, Masquelier, and Baquoy interpreted the illustrations contributed by Gravelot, Boucher, Moreau, Eisen, Choffard, and Monnet. To the same association are due from eight to ten thousand vignettes and small portraits, the "Baisers" and "Fables" of Dorat, the works of Molière and Voltaire, delight and ambition of bibliophiles: a most remarkable output reflecting the greatest honour on the publisher, and placing his judgement on a level with his shrewdness.

The "Artists' Almanac," a sort of "Who's who" of the liberal professions for 1776, credits him with a unique capacity for forming new amateurs, for spreading the love of works of art, and for raising rare engravings to an unprecedented value: "as many claims on his part to the gratitude of the corporation." No doubt the influence he wielded over a wealthy clientele determined Mariette to entrust to him the dispersion of his collections, a sensational event among iconophiles, and the great opportunity of Basan's career in 1775 as the leading expert dealer in Europe.[6]

Encouraged by the success of the little cuts which accompanied the description of the picture gallery of the Duc de Choiseul—who called him "the Marshal de "Saxe of objects of virtu"—he inaugurated the system of illustrated catalogues. The list of auctions conducted by him covers names familiar to eighteenth-century art lovers: those of Bouchardon, Vanloo, Marigny, Slodtz, Cochin, Aliamet, Poullain; the last noteworthy sale in which he took the leading part having been that of Wille's portfolios in 1784.[7] The pathetic end of Gabriel de St. Aubin adds interest to the circumstance that the police called in Basan "to value the papers encumber-"ing the wretched lodgings of the deceased."

After Basan's death, the collections, which had made his hotel in the Rue Serpente one of the sights of Paris, were dispersed; the section of drawings and prints being especially remarkable, and including the complete works of Bartolozzi, and better still, Moreau's *original* sepias for the "Chansons de La Borde." The result on the II *Frimaire* of the seventh republican year—December 1798—was a token of reactionary times. The complete works of Cochin fetched 201 francs, those of Demarteau 200, of Choffard 80; 800 plates after Eisen and Moreau le Jeune went for 54 francs, 900 after Gravelot for 45 francs—one sou a piece—the set of the illustrations for the *Chansons* in proof state for 13 francs.

"An impossible model to follow," mumbled Basan's competitors by way of obituary notice. Bad tempered, bored with anything that was not business and money-making; tiring his life out through a restless desire to be elsewhere, his biography was thus summed up by Miger, the burinist: "He tormented his body "and his soul: he worried his wife and his gold."

Basan left his mark on a new feature of his trade, that of the limited but systematic impressions of unlettered states, whereby he speculated on the hobbies of collectors. Should we blame him? Tablets without legends and margins without coats of arms strike the eye more obviously than the subtle *remarques*, dots, and hyphens, either withheld or altered, which characterized the plates sought after by an older and less sophisticated generation of *cognoscenti*.

Portalis and Beraldi give a picturesque description of the sale-room, the *atelier*, and gallery where Basan displayed his collections: "An endless procession of clients; "goods to be examined, packages to be despatched, catalogues in course of prepara-"tion, agents and touts to be coached, artists to be instructed, amateurs to be "educated, advised, or stirred up. Basan, a blending of vivacity and coolness, saw "to the slightest detail of his business and yet he found time to edit a Dictionary "of Engravers."

A brief notice about himself in his Dictionary shows the difference between the great amateur dealer of the past and the great dealer of later days. As Lady Dilke aptly remarks, Mariette had placed to the service of art and learning the zeal, passion, and erudition which Basan displayed in buying and selling. "The latter "bridged the gulf which separates Mariette from the new temper of men who in

"the study and search of beautiful things have seen the means of making fortunes, "and who place the knack of anticipating their market beyond any pleasure to be "derived from the intrinsic value of the works they handle. By the substitution of "intelligence for personal taste, and by his quickness to feel each customer's pulse, "he may be rivalled, but scarcely be outdone, by his successors of to-day."

An allegorical vignette of Choffard in the catalogue of Basan's sale represents the leader of publishers and experts in his studio surrounded by huge volumes, a picture on an easel, and a portfolio of engravings at his feet submitted by a timid apprentice, while Mercury, the god of commerce, points to a harbour whence bales of prints and books are being shipped across the sea: art-loving America not yet included.

While Basan kept steadily going the workshop where he employed several promising craftsmen, very few of the plates issued by him were his personal work. As one turns over the pages bearing the names of Leveau, Cochin, Flipart, Aveline, and Beauvarlet, a bright but summary rendering is gradually recognized in those actually signed by the editor. His technique, clear and effective if not too scrupulous, is of the order which appeared desirable for the ready sale of Flemish and Dutch subjects. The two most characteristic prints to the execution of which his title is not contested are after a pair of *gouaches* by Gabriel de St. Aubin, "whose super-"vision and consummate skill were not to be trifled with," writes Lady Dilke, "since "he had etched the 'Ballet' himself, and even a burin incapable of adding beauty "to the work as prepared by the author could not obliterate the brilliance of the "aquafortis." But this gratuitous supposition is dismissed by Mr. Dacier on the evidence of the etching of the "Ballet" at the Bibliothèque Nationale, which shows no trace of Gabriel's unmistakable touch.

Grouping and movement on both compositions are typical of the draughtsman: the fiddlers play, the little figures dance with a go, a gaiety and freshness that recall the magic thrown by Watteau over his interpretations of theatrical or rustic festivals. The first reproduces an episode of the mythological, pastoral, comical ballet "scene individable or poem unlimited," staged at the Opera by Fuzelier and Mondonville in 1744, and again in 1759 under the title of "Carnival of Parnassus," where Momus, the god of banter, waving caps and bells like any professional jester, joins a party of Louis XV shepherdesses and masqueraders in the grove sacred to Apollo and the Muses, by the fountain of Hippocrene and on the rock whence Pegasus winged his flight. The leading characters of the French and the Italian comedy file off in pairs: Baron de la Crasse with Mme. de Sottenville, Dr. Diafoirus and Soubrette, Pantaloon and Columbine, Scapin, Harlequin, and among others a flower-girl, impersonated by the famous Guimard.

Apparently unconventional by contrast, and in the style of Teniers, are the characters and arrangements in the "Guinguette," a suburban tea-garden at the Gros-Caillon, without tea but not without good wine, patronized by such informal customers as would hardly object to the landlady or the waitresses joining in a jig with larky guardsmen: a fitting subject for the pantomime composed by Mr. de Hesse and produced at the popular Italian Theatre in 1750.

Among a set of four or five drawings by Gabriel de St. Aubin reproducing contemporary exhibitions, Messrs. de Goncourt mention one of a private view held at the Colisée in 1776 by the Academy of St. Luc, "where the *gouache* of the "'Ballet' was shown—a *gouache* now apparently lost." The original of the "Guinguette" turned up for sale at Leblanc's towards 1860 in such a dubious condition that the artistic merit of the corresponding and extremely rare etching was further enhanced. The impression before us came from the Mühlbacher collection. Messrs. de Goncourt had a study touched up with pastel for the head of the girl snatching the pipe from the teeth of La Ramée, her partner.

Both prints, "eagerly sought after" writes and underlines Bourcard, appeared in the first undated volume of Basan's "Recueil de cent estampes de sujets agréables," the second of which bears the date 1762.

[1] "Spectacles des Tuileries," two capital views etched by him on the same plate in 1760, are known respectively as "The Chairs and the Water-cart." To the impression at the Bibliothèque Nationale is annexed the following contemporary note: "In those days the Tuileries Gardens was the meeting place "of the smartest set in the capital, but one could only sit on a few wooden benches widely scattered about "the side avenues, almost invariably occupied and, of course, in great demand. If a man happened to have "secured one, a lady was certain to curtsy before him by way of claiming the place. French politeness "seldom refused. In 1760, however, Bontemps, Governor of the Château, had a few thousand chairs placed "in the main avenue, and granted the lease of them to Mme. Allard, his mistress. The convenience drew a "much greater number of idlers and brought in close upon 14,000 livres a year; the benches were abandoned "as *infra dig.* But as the people complained of too much dust, the lessees had an ingenious cart made to "water the walk. Thence the subjects of each print." Two impressions touched up and annotated by St. Aubin himself were one of the sensations of the Destailleur sale in 1890.

Perfect wonders are Gabriel's drawings of the Salons of 1753 and 1757: also etched by him. The powerful rendering of the crowd in every conceivable attitude mounting the grand staircase of the Louvre in one; the delightful ease and insight which characterizes in the other the mimic of every man and woman standing before the various pictures, above all before Boucher's portrait of Pompadour, are triumphs of a personal style. A marvellous *gouache* by Gabriel, the great attraction of the show-case of miniatures at the Wallace Collection, represents an entertainment given for Louis XV at the Colisée in 1772. Mr. Norzy had paid 320 francs for it at the Perignon sale in 1864; a few years later Lord Hertford bought it for 1,500 francs.

[2] In 1808, on the death of Augustin de St. Aubin, 14 catalogues of picture sales fully illustrated by Gabriel, 13 of his sketch-books, and 143 drawings were sold in one lot for 87 francs 10 sous. Various amateurs have since contended for them. Ten are at the Bibliothèque Nationale. Mr. Heseltine had the catalogue of the Randon de Boisset sale. On one of them, next to the sketch of Greuze's "Girl with a Dog," is the annotation: "The painter's daughter sat for this little girl."

[3] Under his pencil drawing of a woman and an abbé is written: "Sketched while walking at seven "o'clock in the evening: 10th Sept. 1764." His ubiquitous activity extended to law courts and prisons. The Bibliothèque Nationale has his sketch of "Damiens the Scelerate"—the would-be assassin of Louis XV—

bound to a stone at the Bastille. In the background he is shown quartered by horses, with the mention: "This is how he will be executed."

4 "Scellés et Inventaires d'Artistes," published by J. Guiffrey.

5 He certainly signed fifty tiresome portraits of Kings of England. The Bibliothèque Nationale has six heavy folio volumes, containing large sets of reproductions of pictures and a variety of independent subjects, the work really of his "pensioners" known as the complete "Œuvre de Basan."

6 The Mariette collection, besides a number of antiques, of pictures, and objects, included a never equalled choice of drawings and complete sets of the works of the great engravers of every school. Having declined the King's offer of 300,000 livres for the complete group of the latter, his heirs realized 11,500 livres less than the price refused.

7 Basan's foresight as a business man is instanced by the uneasiness he had long felt over the trend of affairs in France, and the timely advice given to his friend Wille to part with his collections of engravings before the general depression should further affect the market. This second sale in 1785 did not prove as satisfactory as the previous one, when during four days Wille's drawings and pictures had answered his grasping expectations.

313.

LA COMPARAISON DU BOUTON DE ROSE

Engraved by DENNEL in 1780

First state.

PORTALIS and Beraldi assign the dates 1741-1806 to a joint and summary notice of two DENNEL brothers, both engravers; one the pupil of Beauvarlet, the other of Wille, who retouched several of his plates. The authorship of this print, as well as that of "S'il m'etait aussi fidèle," after Fragonard (No. 160), entered under their surname is not determined by the Christian name of either craftsman.[1]

The monogram L.S. on the tablet denotes, minus the last initial, the winsome Louise Nicole Godeau, wife of Augustin de St. Aubin, to whom the print was dedicated by her most humble and obedient servant Dennel, the owner, according to the inscription of the original picture, now apparently lost, and whose address was Rue du petit Bourbon, close to the Foire St. Germain.

Although the print appeared in 1781, after the death of Gabriel de St. Aubin, there is no doubt that the artist had seen a proof of it the year before, for the Scheikevitch sale in May 1910 included an impression of "la Comparaison," annotated in his own hand and touched up by him by way of improvement, as was his wont or mania, even with the copper-plates and works of others. Bourcard quotes another impression bearing the mention "retouched by Wille junior."

Being given the subject with its circumstantial title, it is surprising that it should not have been printed in colours to set off the full value of a roseate simile.

[1] An instance of this sort suggests to the English author of a preface to "French XVIIIth century line engravings" the generic remark that "the engraver's art of that time being purely objective, the "artist's individuality was practically non-existent, owing to the similar and unemotional quality of line and "technique common to all, the essential characteristics of which did not alter sufficiently in the various "masters to create originality." Leaving aside the delicate charm and the decorative sense which pervaded the best productions of the period, it must be borne in mind that judgement on prints should not be passed according to the standard of pictures, and that French engravers were good, indifferent, or bad in proportion not only to the delicacy and skill with which they handled their lines, but above all to their deftness as draughtsmen. Who would not recognize a distinct personal note in the etchings of Moreau and de Launay, in the prints of Duclos and Simonet, not to mention St. Aubin, Janinet, and Debucourt?

IL EST TROP TARD

By and after A. F. Sergent

ANTOINE FRANÇOIS SERGENT

314.

IL EST TROP TARD

Engraved by Antoine François Sergent in 1789, printed in colours

First state.

ON leaving the *atelier* of Augustin de St. Aubin, SERGENT (1751-1847) worked first at the peculiar vignettes commissioned by Restif de la Bretonne for his weird novels; then, having produced two plates on the aerostatic ascents of Charles Robert in 1783, he collaborated with Alix, to whose iconography of great men he contributed an admirable likeness of his own brother-in-law, General Marceau, wearing the Hussar uniform in which the hero of Sambre and Meuse died at twenty-seven. In every one of his portraits the dress presents a happy compromise between convention and reality, unsurpassed even by Moreau le Jeune. Had he not been a hot-headed politician, he might have ranked as an artist next to Debucourt and Janinet. But he soon neglected pencil and burin to become secretary of a Jacobin club, a stirring stump orator, one of the conquerors of the Bastille, a most advanced Montagnard.[1]

The civic virtues of Sergent the pure, as his friends called him, were variously judged. In 1792, as according to his version, he had bought for two louis a fine cut stone found at the Tuileries while he inventoried the contents of that palace, the rumour spread that he had appropriated a cameo worth 100,000 livres. It was an awkward accusation for a member of the National Convention, who had voted the death of Louis XVI, had defended Marat, and was actually supposed to be a Septembrist.[2] Even after he contributed to recover the Regent,[3] which had been stolen from the old Crown jewels, he could not get rid of the nickname of "Sergent Agate."

Arrested by order of Robespierre, his personal enemy, he managed to escape to Basle, and after various wanderings he became librarian to the University of Turin. In 1830 a former Jacobin colleague, Louis Philippe, the son of Egalité, who happened to have become King of the French, remembered him and granted him a small annuity. Sergent had then lost his eyesight.

The love affair of this revolutionist with the Citoyenne Cornel, a vignettist and an engraver herself, who had first been married at fourteen, reads like the counterpart of the "Nouvelle Héloïse." At eighty-four years of age Sergent dictated with the passionate expressions of youth a description of the lady's intellectual and personal attractions.

"Il est trop tard," or "The lovers discovered," was exhibited at the Salon of 1793 with the mention "composed, painted, and engraved by Sergent, one of the "Committee of public Instruction." The rural wantonness of the subject may have suggested Baudouin, but the composition was absolutely original, and the various plates required by a delicate process which reminds one of Janinet had been so skilfully handled that this colour print is one of the finest of the school. "An "impropriety," writes Delteil, "shown at the Salon of 1793, when the Terror was "in full swing."

"Very pretty, very much sought after," says Bourcard, who warns collectors against modern reproductions. On the back of the impression before us the mention "with the girl's knee uncovered" sets off a feature of the earliest state.

[1] The extreme democratic wing of the Legislative Assembly (October 1791-September 1792) sat on the topmost benches or the "Mountain," while the opposite party—the Girondists—sat on the "Plain," or the floor of the house.

[2] Such was the name given to the perpetrators of the atrocious massacres in the Paris prisons which went on continuously from the 2nd to the 7th of September 1792.

[3] The Pitt diamond weighing 136 carats, bought by the Regent in 1717 for 135,000 livres, and valued at 480,000 livres, is now shown in the central case of the Apollo gallery at the Louvre.

315.

MARIE-THÉRÈSE CHARLOTTE, DUCHESS OF ANGOULÊME

Engraved by CHRISTIAN VON MECHEL in 1795, printed in colours

Second state.

AFTER studying in Germany as an etcher and burinist, VON MECHEL (1737-1817) went to Paris to perfect himself at the school of Wille, under the patronage of Eberts, banker and amateur. Eventually he settled as a dealer of curios at Basle, where he opened a workshop for engravers, though few of his apprentices, Romanet and Guttenberg among them, could endure the tuition of a man who, as Huber puts it, "was more concerned with personal profits than "with the furtherance of his art." At a time when modernized drawing was wont to distort the characteristics of the old masters, Mechel reproduced the works of Hans Holbein, the glory of Basle, and yet the fantastic weirdness of the "dance of Death" asserts itself even through an arbitrary interpretation. The complete set of Hedlinger's medals as reproduced by him convey an accurate idea of the originals and their metallic appearance.

In a very different strain Mechel engraved the arrival of Madame Royale[1] at Basle in 1795, issuing at the same time a portrait of the Princess on which is written "Par Ch. de Mechel, graveur" without any other name. Before this evidence we fail to see why Bourcard should enter the print as by and after Sergent. The assertion of Portalis that on some impressions the scratched initials A.S. are discernible confirms the attribution of the picture to the well-known revolutionary artist who happened to have taken refuge at Basle, and who, dreading to appear too prominently as the painter of Louis XVI's daughter, may have asked Mechel to withhold his name, but would hardly ask him to sign the plate if the interpretation was not really his own.

MARIE THÉRÈSE CHARLOTTE (1778-1851), the daughter of Louis XVI and of Marie Antoinette, with whom she had been imprisoned since June 1791, was separated from her brother in June 1795. Twenty days after, the Committee of public safety proposed to Vienna to exchange "the daughter of the last King of the French" for the four members of the Convention, the War Minister, the Ambassador, and a representative of the people who had been arrested by Austria

when they had gone to relieve General Dumouriez of his command after he had been defeated at Neerwinde. It was only on Christmas day of that year that the exchange actually took place at Basle, whence Madame Royale proceeded to Vienna. She married in 1790 her cousin, the Duc d'Angoulême, eldest son of Count d'Artois, with whom she wandered for years from Austria to Switzerland, to Italy, and Great Britain. After Napoleon's first abdication she accompanied Louis XVIII in his state entry into Paris on 3 May 1814, being hailed as the guardian angel of France who had once written on the walls of the Temple prison: "O Lord, forgive "the murderers of my parents."

The landing of Napoleon from Elba one year later found her at Bordeaux. Through sheer energy she managed to hold that city for the Royalists ten days after the Emperor had again taken up his residence at the Tuileries. At the defection of the army she sailed for England, whence she joined at Gand the fugitive Bourbons. Napoleon spoke of her then as the only man of her family.

Although the Dauphin, her husband, had no political influence under Charles X, on 29 July 1830 she strenuously opposed the evacuation of the capital by the army, which led to the flight of the ministry and the King's abdication. Then under the title of Countess of the Marne she settled in Austria.

In his "Françaises du XVIIIme siècle" Bourcard reproduces the "delicious "portrait of this interesting Princess," and dwells on her "charming features." As a fact with her marked Bourbon nose, a heavy figure, and a distant countenance never brightened up by a smile, the consequence, no doubt, of her early and terrible experiences, Marie Thérèse Charlotte was anything but attractive. Though intelligent and cultured, she has been held responsible for some of the obnoxious ordinances regarding the Press under the second Restoration.

[1] At the court of the Bourbons, the daughters of the King and of the Dauphin were styled collectively as *Mesdames de France*. The eldest was simply called Madame or Madame Royale: the Christian name of the others being added individually to that title, as Madame Elizabeth, Madame Victoire.

M. SURUGUE-DESFOSSÉS

316.

LA REINE ANNONÇANT À Mme. DE BELLEGARDE DES JUGES ET LA LIBERTÉ DE SON MARI EN MAI 1777

Engraved by Antoine Jean Duclos in 1779

The etching.

SURUGUE-DESFOSSÉS, an artillery officer, one of the eleven children of Surugue junior, the engraver, attracted attention to his talent as an amateur with a pastel representing Queen Marie Antoinette performing an act of kindness variously talked about in military and fashionable circles.

Antoine Dubois de Bellegarde, an uncommonly tall and handsome officer in the Royal Bodyguards, having been convicted by court-martial of breach of trust in connection with some army contract, took refuge in Prussia, enlisted there in the infantry, deserted after a few months, and, returning to France, surrendered himself to the authorities. His energetic wife organized his defence, entrusted it to Linguet, a celebrated lawyer, and one Sunday forenoon, having gained admission to the Mirror Gallery at Versailles, knelt before the Queen, who was coming out of chapel, and implored her protection. Bellegarde was released, but his gratitude towards Marie Antoinette did not last long, for at the first outbreak of the Revolution he displayed the loudest enthusiasm for reforms, and, as a deputy for the Charente, voted in favour of the King's execution, openly inducing two fellow members to do likewise.

The print, of exactly the same size as the original drawing, shows the Queen accompanied by her brother Joseph II, the Austrian Emperor, by the Counts and Countesses of Provence and Artois, her brothers and sisters-in-law, and by her ladies-in-waiting, Mmes. de Chimay, de Mailly, de Grammont. With Mme. de Bellegarde and her boy are three artillery officers, Messrs. de Lagarde, d'Agoult, and de Montezon. The extravagant head-dresses of the ladies and the speckled coats of the gentlemen mark the fashions of 1777.

An impression of this etching, one of the best works of DUCLOS, who excelled in the aquafortis preparations of his plates, is permanently framed as a specimen in the print room of the Bibliothèque Nationale. The finished engraving presented to the Queen had been printed on blue paper.

JACQUES SWEBACH-DEFONTAINE

317.

LE CAFÉ DES PATRIOTES

Engraved by Jean Baptiste Morret in 1792, printed in colours

First state.

SWEBACH-DEFONTAINE (1769-1822), the pupil of Duplessis, gained a certain reputation for the able grouping of his military scenes, and the fine perspective of his landscapes, although these qualifications hardly came into requisition in his capacity of first painter to the Sèvres manufactory. In 1809 he was awarded the great Salon medal for a "Napoleon crossing the Danube."

Out of the voluptuary pictures of eighteenth-century masters a host of engravers had got their living, but when a new order of things made a clean sweep of that particular form of art, the members of the craft hardly knew where to turn. It occurred to many of them that it might be worth while to exploit on copper the political transformation, and to tackle history with various processes more or less unsuited to it. As a result their new-fashioned plates proved to be exceedingly tedious.

Such is the genesis of several gloomy aquatints published by J. B. MORRET (17?-18?) who, after interpreting a few compositions of A. de St. Aubin and Borel—the "Paysan mécontent" (No. 45) amongst them—turned his attention to revolutionary and counter-revolutionary subjects, ending with a grotesque history of Joseph. One of his prints, however, enjoys the favour of collectors as a quaint document of the period. It represents the café where between 1789 and 1794 newsmongers used to congregate and the police kept watch owing to its proximity to the Jacobin club of the Rue St. Honoré.[1]

The headgear of two grenadiers, whose outline is reflected in a mirror, is the distinctive feature of the first state of the engraving. In the second, the busbies so worn were replaced by one flat helmet and one phrygian or police cap, the English version of the title was eliminated and the explanatory mention "grande nouvelle du Nord"—great news from the North—inserted after the French inscription. This mention accounts for the expression of the standing figure in the centre and does not admit of the interpretation offered by Portalis that the patriots at the café

LE CAFÉ DES PATRIOTES

By J. B. Morret. After J. Swebach-Defontaine

Cafféé des Patriotes.

a Patriot's Coffée House.

read the decrees of the Convention. Morret's address was also changed for that of Bance.

The stern and unusual character of the plate provides a substitute for attraction and charm.

[1] Jacobins, a name given in the thirteenth century to the Dominican friars in France from their convent, which had been the hospital of the pilgrims of St. James (Jacobus) at Paris, and where at the outbreak of the Revolution the forty members of a political club—first called "Breton"—held meetings. The club had branches all over the kingdom and became the principal power in the country, being supreme during the "reign of Terror." Mirabeau and Marat belonged to it; Robespierre was its president, and under his influence Jacobin policy held supreme sway, until on November 1794 his fall led to the dissolution of the society. The meeting-place was then closed and the adjoining *Café des Patriotes* sank into insignificance.

NICOLAS TANCHE

318, 319.

LE DANGER DES BOSQUETS—LES DÉSIRS NAISSANTS

A pair engraved by Pierre Adrien Le Beau in 1780

First states.
Coat of arms of Mme. de Damery.

LA CHAVIGNERIE'S "Dictionary of French Artists" confines the information about TANCHE to the date of his birth: 1740. Whatever may have been the painter's aptitudes, his illustration of the classic warning: "latet anguis in herba"—there is a snake in the grass—lacked the grace that would lend attraction to a modish composition, while his conception of dawning desires overdid the mellifluence of the same style.

LE BEAU (1748-1818), the most skilled of many burinists in the employ of Esnauts and Rapilly, the publishers, could hardly cope with the amount of work entrusted to him, had to neglect quality for the sake of quantity, and was apt to err on the dark side of chiaroscuro, a fault especially evident in some of his vignettes. The pair before us, "very fine" says Bourcard, stands out as his most finished performance; its elaborate borders may have been drawn either by Queverdo or Marillier, who often assisted him in the ornamentation of his prints.

Le Beau engraved no less than ten portraits of Queen Marie Antoinette. His wife made for herself a speciality of hand-coloured fashion-plates.

LA NOCE DE VILLAGE

By C. M. Descourtis. After N. A. Taunay

LA FOIRE DE VILLAGE

By C. M. Descourtis. After N. A. Taunay

NICOLAS-ANTOINE TAUNAY

320-323.

LA NOCE DE VILLAGE—LA FOIRE DE VILLAGE —LA RIXE—LE TAMBOURIN

A set of four engraved by Charles Melchior Descourtis, printed in colours

First states of the first two; second states of the whole set.
Coats of arms of the painter Hentzi and of Mr. de Godefroy.

TAUNAY (1755-1830), a pupil of Casanova and Lépicié, was received at the Academy in 1784 as a landscape painter. Fragonard helped him to start by buying his first picture. In order to try and retrieve a fortune lost in the revolutionary turmoil he went to Brazil in 1816 and spent three years there, organizing a Fine Arts Academy. Among his few extant works, principally Bonapartesque subjects, the best, "A village Festival," now at the museum of Montpellier, is closely related through its happy composition to the set before us, one of the most remarkable in the whole gamut of French prints, known familiarly to collectors as "The four Taunays." When we remember that Debucourt intended to pair his "Menuet de la mariée" (No. 90) with this "Noce de village," no further evidence is needed of the artistic merit of the four scenes interpreted by Descourtis.

As to grouping, the "Tambourin" is the most successful, though the first two are especially prized: their mellowness of colour, the pretty theatrical setting, the ambient airiness, the successful rendering of a sky suffused with golden light, the little bride sparkling like a jewel in the "Noce," and the bright parade of harlequin and pierrot in the "Foire" have a distinct Watteauesque appearance unequalled on any other plate of the time. The dramatic character of "la Rixe" interferes with the attraction of the print and, for that matter, of the *gouache* itself, once in the Mühlbacher collection. Madame Fould owns the original of "la Foire."

Only two states exist of the "Rixe" and "Tambourin"; but the "Noce" and "Foire" are usually met in a third state where the coats of arms have been struck out and the titles are written in English letters to match the calligraphy under the other pair. The signal rarity of the unlettered impressions of the "Noce" is attested by a fleur-de-lis stamped in the bottom corner by the publisher.

The Marquis de Varennes has half a score of curious trial proofs of the complete set, including the "Tambourin" printed in bistre, and the "Noce" as well as the "Foire," reduced to 32mo size, in black, the first of them reversed. As to several modern reproductions Bourcard gravely asserts that none of them could ever deceive an experienced eye.

LA RIXE

By C. M. Descourtis. After N. A. Taunay

Le Roi et

LE TAMBOURIN

By C. M. Descourtis. After N. A. Taunay

Le Tambourin

A Paris chez Moret rue de la Bucherie N.° 5

ETIENNE THÉOLON

324.

L'INVOCATION À L'AMOUR

Engraved by Carl Guttenberg

Two impressions of the first state: one retouched by the painter.

WERE it not for the warmth and fluency of his brush, THÉOLON, or Theaulon (1739-1780), a pupil of Vien, would be looked upon merely as a clever *pasticheur*, so obviously did the erotic subjects of Fragonard inspire the turn and arrangement of his compositions. Though keeping on the right side of a line that separates copies from spirited imitations of a particular style, the easel pictures and the decorations executed by him for Count d'Artois at Bagatelle have all the defects of their qualities. For the sake of bringing into full relief a figure or a group the artist drowned his backgrounds in shadows and overdid the Rembrandtesque manner of his model.

Be that as it may, the technique of "l'Invocation," now in the museum at Angers, comes so close to that of the great Provençal master that its paternity is debatable on the merits of the unsigned original, quite apart from the fact that the second state of Guttenberg's interpretation bears the mention: "Fragonard del." Critics who refuse to accept that testimony quote as a precedent two prints after Trinquesse published as being after Fragonard (Nos. 326, 327), and two prints after Fragonard issued as reproducing works of Boucher (Nos. 143, 144), just as some of the engravings after Pater had been passed off, through commercial trickery, under the name of Watteau. The very doubt commends Théolon's best achievement and imparts an exceptional interest to both proofs before us, the first of which was considered by no less an authority than Mr. Walferdin, who gave the picture to Fragonard, as having been touched up by the master for the engraver's own guidance. Could the paper only tell us if the few knowing strokes that brought so obvious an improvement upon the second impression came from the same hand that drew "l'Amour, la Fontaine d'amour, le Songe d'amour, le Serment d'amour, le Vœu à l'Amour."

Portalis does not intervene in the debate, but his enumeration of Fragonard's engraved works includes an undescribed stipple of "l'Invocation," to which with puzzling reticence no comment is added except the erroneous mention that it bears

no engraver's name. Messrs. de Goncourt make no reference to it. On the other hand Bourcard, whose artistic appreciations may be desultory, but whose classifications are the result of exhaustive research, enters the print, according to the catalogue of the Kinnen sale in 1891, under Théolon, after whom he quotes no other work. La Chavignerie's Dictionary gives to Théolon's picture at Angers the title of "Offrande à l'Amour," in common with a composition by Lagrenée who had also painted an "Invocation to Love," interpreted by Janinet along with his "Offering" (No. 217).

Whatever the accurate attribution should be, and apart from the signal rarity of a trial proof altered by an artist's hand, any collector would welcome this "Invocation." Acting on his own convictions Mr. Christophle placed it unconditionally among the works after Fragonard in which his choice had been particularly fortunate. Now if through a rigorous process of selection, adopted in the rearrangement of this great portfolio, the print, instead of being given the benefit of the doubt, is entered under the heading of a comparatively minor painter, all pros and cons having been carefully sifted, it should be remembered that a collection of irreproachable quality, and a thoroughly representative character, can afford to adhere to the fastidious requirements of up-to-date criticism, even at the expense of a plate dubiously given to Fragonard. As a print after Théolon its transposed interest does not flag, since this "Invocation à l'Amour" ranks among a few successful attempts to imitate without plagiarism the impassionate mood of the master to whom eighteenth-century Cupids owed the most fervid supplications and votive offerings.

CARL GUTTENBERG (1744-1790), a native of Nuremberg, taught in Paris and befriended by Wille, who employed him at first as his letter engraver, showed such proficiency that he was called upon to contribute a plate—the "Rendez-vous pour Marly"—to the "Monument du Costume." His name is discernible through a magnifier on the diminutive adaptation of Moreau's "N'ayez pas peur" for the "Tableaux de la bonne Compagnie." He was employed by Basan on the "Cabinet Choiseul," by Mechel on the "Galerie de Düsseldorf," and by St. Non on the "Voyage de Naples." After a mediocre unknown artist he engraved "the destruction "of the tea chests at Boston in 1773," of which the impressions with a cock are very scarce, since the emblem had to be erased by order of the French censor. The technique of Carl resembles so closely that of Henry, his brother, that prints signed Guttenberg without initials are given indiscriminately to either craftsmen or to both together.

FREDERICA SOPHIA WILHELMINA OF PRUSSIA,
PRINCESS OF ORANGE NASSAU

By C. M Descourtis. After J. F. A. Tischbein

JEAN-FRÉDÉRIC AUGUSTE TISCHBEIN

325.

FREDERICA SOPHIA WILHELMINA OF PRUSSIA, PRINCESS OF ORANGE NASSAU

Engraved by CHARLES MELCHIOR DESCOURTIS

First state.

TISCHBEIN (1750-1812), court painter at Waldeck, principally known by portraits of German and Dutch royalties, studied in Italy and in France where he paid more attention to the colouring and technique of eighteenth-century masters than to the severe drawing of David. Although one of the champions of colour printing, Charles M. DESCOURTIS (1753-1820) lacked originality. Technically, as well as in the choice of subjects, his work, limited to about twenty plates, reflected all along that of Janinet. Having made himself known with some pretty views of Paris and Rome after Demachy, on which the colour is obtained through a finely tooled stippling, he established his reputation on the strength of four delightful village scenes after Taunay (Nos. 320-323), interpreted in a mellow gamut of tints. The "Noce de village" among them, issued in 1785, obtained the distinction of being temporarily paired a few months later with the "Menuet de la mariée," painted and engraved by Debucourt. Next came the characteristic likeness before us. Somewhat cruder in tone are two other well-known prints, the "Amant surpris" (No. 59) and the "Espiègles" after Schall. There is no need to mention three dull sets of "Don Quichotte, l'Enfant prodigue, Paul et Virginie."

The Princess FREDERICA SOPHIA WILHELMINA (1751-1820), niece of Frederick the Great, was the daughter of Prince August Wilhelm of Prussia, who had been debarred from the succession to the throne when, after the defeat of Kolin in 1757, the Austrians cut up an army corps under his command. Having married William V, hereditary Stadtholder of the Netherlands, this masterly woman weathered the storms of the House of Orange towards the end of the eighteenth century. In 1787 she induced Great Britain and Prussia to intervene in the internal disputes of Holland and reinstate her husband, whom the anti-Orange party had turned out. But the French Revolution again upset matters, and when

in 1795 a Batavian republic was established under French domination, she fled with the Stadtholder to Potsdam, obtaining for him later on the abbeys of Fulda and Corvey, a meagre compensation.

In exile Frederica Sophia devoted her energies to uphold the rights of her son whom in 1813 she saw recognized as sovereign Prince, and in 1815 proclaimed as William I, King of the Netherlands; the Belgian provinces being united to the Dutch.

As the Chalcographia Hagiana entered this engraved portrait in 1791, we may assume that it represents the Princess at about forty years of age, if the print was executed soon after the picture.

LOUIS-ROLLAND TRINQUESSE

326, 327.

LA DÉCLARATION—LE SERMENT

A pair engraved by BERVIC

First states.

THROUGH absent-mindedness on the part of a parish clerk, who overlooked a right declaration of birth and registered him under the wrong one, BERVIC (1756-1822), instead of bearing the paternal name of Balvay, went through life under a cognomen that was not his own. His natural gifts as a draughtsman and his leanings towards a liberal career thwarted the commercial instincts of his parents who, however, as a makeshift against idleness and as a transaction between art and trade, agreed to his being trained as an engraver, "considering that the "practice of that craft brings into it some appearance of business and occasionally "the reality of ready sales and prompt returns."

If Bervic was gifted, quick work was not to be his way. Barely fifteen prints stand to his name: a meagre output as to quantity. Danton, one of the leaders of the "Reign of Terror," having occasion to refer to a portrait of the King after Callet, said: "We know Bervic's Louis XVI; again his Louis XVI, nothing but his Louis XVI," with the immediate result that the plate was confiscated and destroyed.

Wille, who maintained with him the friendliest relations, mentions him in his memoirs as "one of the best pupils he had ever taught: clever, well trained, of "sound intellect; altogether a credit to his school." After working with Le Prince, and after studying assiduously Nanteuil's severe technique, of which Wille possessed the wholesome tradition, Bervic devoted himself unreservedly to pure line, and led the reaction against engraving *en petit* or on a minute scale, against stipple, aquatint, and colour printing, "all processes of servile reproduction," in favour of the pure academic method. His initiative prevailed, and French eighteenth-century engravers, writes Mr. Courboin, had their David in the person of Bervic, a fore-ordained burinist. His competence was so widely recognized that he and his old master were appointed arbitrators in the dispute arising round the completion of Cochin's "French sea ports" after Vernet, a sensational affair among the profession.

Having nearly come to grief with his Louis XVI in troublous times, Bervic was more fortunate with the portraits of Napoleon and Louis XVIII; he was officially chosen to decorate municipalities and schools, according to the way loyal winds blew at intervals over France. His two best prints, "la Déclaration" and "le Serment," are almost as brilliant as anything Wille ever did, and not quite so metallic: the rendering of the lustrous effects of silks and satins suggest the painstaking technique of Terburg, or, better still, of Fragonard in his cold Dutch mood. As a matter of fact, Fragonard's name was inscribed on the plates in order to attract buyers, although the composition of the pictures, now in the Dijon Museum, could hardly strike one as worthy of the attribution: the lovers of "le Serment" in particular being alternately poised and crouched as for a figure dance. Trinquesse was the artist whose two fairly good imitations of a passing manner of the master then in vogue were entered, through the commercial trickery of a publisher, under the paternity of "l'Escarpolette," "la Fuite à dessin," "le Chiffre d'amour." Up to this day Bervic's skill has allowed them to pass muster among the engravings after Fragonard as catalogued by Bourcard in 1893 and 1912; just as in the eighteenth century "la Bascule" and "Colin-Maillard" (Nos. 143, 144) had been classified among the engraved works of Boucher, whose name they bore for a time, although the originals were by his best pupil. The blunder is all the more deliberate that after warning collectors against modern reprints of this pair and pointing out the rarity of proof states, Bourcard refers to the very picture of "la Déclaration" when in the possession of Mr. Deglise, utterly ignoring the artist who was so far responsible for it and its companion that he sent them both under his own name to the Salon of 1785.

Of TRINQUESSE, however successful he may have been as a *pasticheur*, the most significant record is that twice the Academy rejected his candidature. The episodic titles of several genre subjects, exhibited by him between 1779 and 1793, appear to have been more characteristic than his style: "A mother taking "severely to task a young man because of the marked attentions paid to her "daughter, who in the meanwhile slips a note into his hands"; "Portrait of a lady "holding in one hand the miniature of the man she loves and with the other "writing on the sand the thoughts that fill her mind," and so on. La Chavignerie, who does not quote the dates of the painter's birth and death, mentions among his works a portrait of General Washington.

On the background of "la Déclaration" is reproduced a famous group by Pajou, once the property of Madame du Barry, "Venus educating Cupid," destroyed at the Revolution.

LE DÉJEUNER DE FANFAN

By J. B. Mallet. After H. N. Van Gorp

HENRI-NICOLAS VAN GORP

328.

LE DÉJEUNER DE FANFAN

Engraved by Jean Baptiste Mallet, printed in colours

First state.

ABOUT VAN GORP, or VANGOPF, a French artist of Flemish origin, the only available information is that between 1793 and 1819 he exhibited at the Salon several *gouaches* and a few portraits. Almost as scanty is the biography of MALLET (1753-1835), a pupil of Prudhon, better known as a painter of small interior scenes than as an engraver. A pair of Directoire prints by him, signed "Malles" after Van Gorp, the best of which is "le Déjeuner de Fanfan," had apparently been overlooked by amateurs until two proofs of them in colours created a mild sensation at the Gerbeau and Valentin sales in 1908 and 1911 respectively. Whereupon Bourcard wrote: "due note should be taken of this "charming baby's breakfast."

Owing to the dearth of *gouaches* by Baudouin, Lavreince, and Hoin, the works of Mallet are beginning to be sought after by collectors who, for want of thrushes, must be contented with blackbirds.

329.

LA STATUE DU DIEU PAN

Printed in colours: engraver unknown

Only state.

AT the Mühlbacher sale the only other known impression of this print—now in the Rothschild collection—was entered under the misleading name of "Laisse-moi donc voir," because of a similarity of subject and properties to the well-known group reproduced by Janinet (No. 200). But if we judge from the countenance of two young women attracted to the scene by an indiscreet young man, why not grant the benefit of the doubt to the intentions of a draughtsman whose psychology seems to have differed from that of Lavreince? The above matter of fact title does away with all insinuations.

Bocher is even more positive, for he calls the anonymous composition "Je ne veux pas voir." Bourcard quotes an oval of this kind attributed to Lavreince, engraved by Chapuy, without any reference to a title. Portalis and Beraldi in their notice on de Longueil are inclined to give to that painter and engraver an extremely rare oval plate in quarto which they describe as follows under the name of "the Statue of Pan": "to the left of the statue of the Greek god of pastures half hidden "within a grove, a gallant holding his sweetheart by the waist turns aside the "branches, that she should have a full view of the marble. The young woman "looks the other way as if shocked, while the young man is scolded for his indis-"cretion by another lady seated on a bench." This, no doubt, is the subject before us, although the attribution to de Longueil is questionable. Mr. Danlos, who suggests the name of Van Gorp, excludes altogether that of Lavreince.

LA STATUE DU DIEU PAN

After H. N. Van Gorp

CARLE VAN LOO

330.

LA MARQUISE DE POMPADOUR EN BELLE JARDINIÈRE

Engraved by Jean Louis Anselin

The etching and the third state.

HAVING studied in Rome under Luti and Le Gros, CARLE VAN LOO (1705-1765) completed his training in Paris under his brother, Jean Baptiste, who was twenty years his senior. On returning with Boucher from a second and triumphant journey to Italy, he was received at the Academy in 1734. Had he not thought it wiser to cultivate his reputation as an exponent of high-pitched art with mythological and religious themes, he might have developed into a brilliant and almost poetic interpreter of the fashionable life of his day. Such at least had been the early promise made with his "Halte de Chasse" now at the Louvre, once in the private apartments at Fontainebleau, mentioned in the Republican inventories of 1794 as "a picture not worth preserving."

Superficial, with marked leanings towards theatrical effects, a fit decorator of overdoors and even of fans for Mme. de Pompadour, he had the temperament of a born painter, "just as others," writes Diderot, are "born apostles or cooks; "though painting to him is more of a craft than an art. Mingled reminiscences of "various schools prompt him to represent nature as foreigners see it; only his best "canvases are due to genuine glimpses from his French eyes. With red and white "colours aiming at splendour he often obtains mere glitter: his expressions lack "variety: he interprets nobleness without character, grace without beauty. And "yet, maybe by a mere chance, Carle Van Loo comes very near to genius."

The fact is his remarkable facility and fire caught so skilfully the popular taste that he seemed to direct it in his capacity of first painter to the King. More so than Boucher, he was ultimately made responsible for the extravagances committed by their respective followers, and in the days of the pseudo-classic reaction "vanlootiser" was the unfair synonym for careless drawing and riotous colour.

Grimm says: "nobody showed more forcibly how genius differs from intellect:

"no doubt he had great talent, but otherwise was very stupid. How pitiful to hear "him talk about pictures, though he painted good ones. . . . As he could neither "read nor write, he enjoyed the honours of his post as Assistant Professor at the "Academy without hardly discharging his obligations." As creative powers had long failed him, Wille's diary dismisses the event of his sudden death with the curt entry: "went to the funeral of Mr. Carle van Loo."

Antoinette Jeanne POISSON (1721-1764) was not, as Voltaire once called her, the daughter of a butcher, but of an army contractor, convicted of malpractices. Her mother's friend, Le Normand de Tournehem, a farmer-general, provided for her brilliant education and had her taught all sorts of accomplishments which, besides polishing her mind with the wit of others, revealed to her as an ideal of feminine ambition the possibilities of the career of a royal paramour. By no means of a lovable disposition, a statue of ice, as Louis XV used to call her when first infatuated with her, to be mentally as well as physically attractive was her constant obsession. She married at nineteen the nephew of her benefactor, Le Normand d'Etiolles, who gave her the social position through which, having supplanted Mme. de Chateauroux in the favour of the King, she became officially his mistress, with the title of Marquise de Pompadour. From that time and for nineteen years she ruled the kingdom, its administration and finances, its literature and arts. The choice of the Ministers, whose Council used to meet in her apartments, the wavering to and fro of the political pendulum depended more or less on her meddlesome judgement or her sympathies, and she corresponded regularly with the drawing-room Generals appointed by her to lead the army in the field.

Because Frederick the Great wrote scandalous verses about "Cotillon IV," because the Empress Maria Theresa addressed her a friendly letter, she upset the hereditary policy of the Bourbons which aimed at weakening the Hapsburgs. By bringing about two treatises of alliance with Austria she was partly responsible for the Seven years' War, the defeats of Rosbach and Crefeld, the loss of Guadeloupe, of half the French possessions in India, and of Canada "those few acres of snow." Maritime commerce was practically annihilated in consequence, the State went bankrupt in 1759, and famine riots prepared the way for the Revolution.

The arbitrary course of her "stateswomanship" did not run smoothly, and though holding her royal lover through his weakness or force of habit, she could never count on the morrow: "my life, my terrible life is a struggle," she wrote, "without "one minute to myself." With constant changes from one château to another, with hunting, with theatricals, and all sorts of amusements, with the purchase of works of art and new residences,[1] she strove to divert a King fatigued with pleasures and perpetually bored, while satisfying her own craving for show, for dresses and

baubles, for building and decoration. With the airs of a Mæcenas she displayed her inventive genius for the benefit of Vanloo, Boucher, Oudry, Vernet, Falconet, Coustou, Adam, Pigalle, Soufflot, Gabriel, and Cochin. Sixty million livres is a rough evaluation of the prodigalities into which she involved the Treasury—not quite so paltry a sum in the eighteenth century as in 1923.

The Pompadour style of architecture, painting, and furniture was all that France derived from such extravagance. An open, almost ingenuous worship of the beautiful, a sound taste for *bric-à-brac* with a leaning towards the antique, and a decided preference for decoration were redeeming features in the character of this Queen of the left hand. The times for lofty ambitions having then passed away, it was something to achieve prettiness through a form of art inspired by her and expounded in the pictures of Boucher, as well as in every appointment of sumptuous homes, where columns, panels, and ceilings looked as if moulded with soft paste and spiral shells.

The Sèvres manufactory, a creation over which she almost lost her head, so great was the labour it involved at first, stands to-day as a symbolic monument of Pompadour's progress through history, to show that porcelain is not so brittle as monarchy.[2]

At a time when everybody of distinction pretended to know something of the use of the point and burin, the Marquise stood in the first rank of amateur engravers and interpreted the exquisite intaglios of J. Guay, her protégé, on a series of small plates bearing her signature but showing the unstinted intervention of Boucher and of Cochin.[3]

To lead or warp public opinion a regular suite of philosophers and men of letters danced attendance upon the reigning favourite. She patronized the Encyclopædists without quite grasping their purpose; she made friends with Diderot, d'Alembert, Morellet, Montesquieu; Quesnay, the founder of the physiocrats, was her physician.[4] Voltaire, in no need of patronage, flattered and mocked her in turns. Rousseau, the only contemporary thinker on whom she wasted her advances, was asked to suppress in the "Émile" the sentence "the wife "of a collier is infinitely more estimable than a courtesan."

Undermined by an illness which no artifice or rouge could conceal, she fought against it, granting audiences, perusing political reports, clinging to power with her cold hands, arrogating the exclusive privilege of royalty, that of dying in the King's palace. When told the end was imminent, she had herself dressed in full court costume to receive the last sacraments, and said stoically to the curate: "if you will wait one moment, we shall go out together." Cochin had just sent in the proof of a border to be inserted round a madrigal celebrating her imminent recovery. The pretty little plate showing a brilliant sun emerging from thick clouds dispersed by Cupids never received its legend.

Soon after the Marquise was buried, Maria Leczinska wrote to President

Hénault: "no more mention is made here of what is no more than if *it* had never "existed. That's the way of the world. Is it worth the while to love and to be "loved?" The prelate whom Marigny requested to speak at her funeral had a clever way of turning the difficulty: after stating that in her former capacity of lady-in-waiting to the Queen, the deceased had been under a most virtuous schooling, he went on eulogizing Her Majesty.

Not omitting the appurtenances of pomp and intrigue, the proper surroundings of Madame de Pompadour should have been a perpetual *embarquement pour Cythère* in real life. By chronological order she was the last royal mistress worthy of the name, and to a certain extent of the part.[5]

❖ ❖ ❖

With all her understanding of works of art, and her aptitude for pose and make up, with the exceptional opportunities offered to her by every contemporary sculptor, painter, and burinist, yet Madame de Pompadour was not the ideal subject for a pretty picture, and no picture could convey her "inexpressible countenance." Her physique was above and below that of the average fashionable sitter of the day. Tall, with a perfect figure, a dazzlingly white complexion and splendid fair hair, with beautiful teeth, lovely hands, and a captivating voice, her bearing and expression were artificial. Will rather than nature had shaped her looks; "features she had none," says Argenson. Of a lymphatic constitution, her appearance changed with the weather and the light, with the colour of her gown, the state of her health. These circumstances, and the fact that the lower part of her face aged prematurely, account for the discrepancies between her portraits, some of which are disappointing. As for the prints that reproduce them, the unpopularity of the lady explains their scarcity.[6]

Several years after her death, and more on account of the painting itself than for the sake of the subject, Anselin interpreted "la belle Jardinière." He treated his warm and harmonious etching in the St. Aubin manner, making of the finished plate one of the most luminous engraved effigies of the school. Already in 1876 a good impression fetched 1,120 francs at the Herzog sale.

In his short-lived capacity of first limner to the King, Van Loo, whose court portraits, though formal and dry, were a success at Versailles, had already painted the Marquise as a Sultana embroidering on the tambour—her best likeness in her brother's opinion—and again as a Sultana sipping coffee, two harem-like allegories without the least claim to the dignified style of composition which a king's mistress of that calibre would demand for a semi-official presentment. Did she or did the artist choose the garb and attributes of a fair gardener? All we know is that the picture, now in the J. Pierpont Morgan collection, was seen by Diderot at the Salon of 1759: "yet another of the fair Marquise $7\frac{1}{3}$ ft. by $5\frac{1}{2}$ ft., rather stiff

"and cold. A precious mien, a pinched mouth, the hands of a girl of thirteen, a "huge basket, a flowery gown, a blue-lined straw hat, a fan. . . ." The critic apparently mistook for a fan the bunch of hyacinths held in the right hand.

The inventory of Mme. de Pompadour's effects taken at her death mentions the "belle Jardinière" at Bellevue, whence it was moved to the château of Ménars by Marigny, at whose sale in 1781 Basan bought it for 144 livres and entered it among his treasures as "the likeness of the famous favourite which she liked best of all."

Portalis sees in this portrait an exotic fruit from the royal hothouses, tasteful and juicy, but ready to be gathered or nearly dropping to the ground. The Marquise was then thirty-eight and must have looked very much past her best, if the artist in the capacity of a beauty doctor did not obliterate the flabbiness of her chin and, if far from suing him for slander, she professed to be satisfied with the result. Whatever the superficiality of Carle Van Loo and his mannerisms, he knew how to read in the structure of the head or the shape of the face the remarkable force of character which enabled this woman to hold out so long under the difficulties of an extraordinary position. Her lineaments firmly written on the canvas were interpreted admirably by Anselin. The dress, and the ornate, rather girlish accessories are handled with a precision which does not exclude an appropriate stateliness of treatment, and imparts dignity to the general decorative effect.

[1] The Palace of the Elysée, now the official residence of the President of the Republic, was built in 1718 by Molet for Count d'Evreux, and subsequently bought and enlarged by Mme. de Pompadour, who bequeathed it to the King, "who may perhaps turn it into a residence for one of his grandchildren."

[2] Rose carné Pompadour and not du Barry was invented in 1757 by Xrowt, whose mark is a cross and who received a gratuity of 150 livres.

[3] She engraved, or was supposed to have engraved, "Spring" and "Autumn" after Cochin's drawings, a group of Nymphs and Cupids and the Cave of Sleep, also the "Showman of marmots," "Soap bubbles," and "Milk drinkers" after Boucher. But her "standard work" is the set of sixty-nine small plates after Guay's cut stones, and "Rodogune" after Boucher, etched with the assistance of Cochin. The rarest of the set is "Cupid presenting a nosegay." Guay was actually given an *atelier* in the Palace of Versailles.

To young Cochin the Marquise proved to be the channel of all favours by adopting him as the leading counsel of her artistic purchases and commissions, thus placing in his hands a large amount of patronage. When she named her brother Marigny at the head of the Board of works, Cochin became practically the administrator of French Fine Arts.

[4] The physiocratic school held that the earth is the only source of natural wealth: manufacturers and tradesmen who merely change the form of articles produced by farmers, fishermen, etc., are unproductive: the mercantile system should be opposed: foreign trade to be free. Quesnay was the author of the maxim "laissez faire, laissez passer," advocating a let-alone policy of competition, without State interference. Blanqui declares that the Revolution was only the theory of physiocrats carried into action.

[5] She bequeathed her fortune, valued at thirty-six millions of livres, to her brother, Abel Poisson (1727-1781), who had gradually blossomed into Monsieur de Vandières, the Marquis of Marigny, a Director of the Academy, the Chief Commissioner of the Royal Board of works, a post for which his aptitudes and good taste suited him well. In view of these appointments he had first been sent by the Marquise to Italy on a two years' voyage of study, and possibly of discoveries, while excavations were going on at Herculaneum: Cochin, Soufflot, the architect, and Le Blanc, the man of letters, each contributing, as travelling tutors, a stock

of sober learning. By strengthening classic reaction the return of the party to Paris had far-reaching results: "truly a decisive epoch," wrote Cochin. "We had seen much and with reflection. The ridicule of "the contrast at home struck us and we made no secret of it; Soufflot practised what he preached, I acted "as a busybody."

The sale of Pompadour's furniture lasted one year; still more remarkable was the sale of Marigny's collections in 1781. Both catalogues are almost as interesting as art reference works.

To Buffon, "whose genius equalled the majesty of nature," the Marquise bequeathed her parrot, her monkey, and Mimi, her pet dog, which had been engraved by Ferrard after Huet as "Constancy."

6 Watson mezzotinted one of them in England after Boucher.

The reference to Pompadour's unpopularity reminds one that in 1760, after she inaugurated and drove over the fine bridge built by Perronet and Hupeau on the Loire at Orléans, the following lampoon circulated: "no bridge could be stronger: it has just borne the heaviest load of France." The structure is still intact, though the Germans—a worse burden—crossed it in 1870.

LA MARQUISE DE POMPADOUR EN BELLE JARDINIÈRE

By J. L. Anselin. After C. Van Loo

LOUIS MICHEL VAN LOO

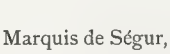
331.

LOUIS XVI WHEN DAUPHIN

Engraved by Louis-Marin Bonnet in 1770, printed in colours

Lettered state.

THE life-long and successful ambition of Michel VAN LOO (1707-1771), great-grandson, grandson, son, and nephew of painters, was to keep up the family reputation for flashy colours and for an easy composition combined with the knack of imparting elegance to sitters. Trained in the studio of Jean Baptiste, his father, together with Carle, his uncle, by two years only his senior, he made himself known with several court portraits at Turin. Having returned to Paris, he tackled mythological subjects, and on the recommendation of Rigaud was appointed painter to Philip V, King of Spain, who entrusted to him the direction of the decorative works carried on at the Palace of Madrid. But portraiture suited him better than ceilings, and as there was more scope for them in France he came home again, exhibited a fine head of Carle Van Loo, now at the Louvre, a Louis XV in royal robes, and a "Spanish concert," Spanish indeed for vigour but not for hues, which actually roused Diderot to enthusiasm. A sort of artistic ovation greeted another group, that of his own family. The likeness of the young Dauphin engraved by Bonnet was apparently his last official commission.



In his impartial essays on Marie Antoinette, the Marquis de Ségur, from whom we have summarily borrowed a character sketch of the Dauphiness (No. 286), gives the following portrait of her bridegroom: "In May 1770, when he married, "the future Louis XVI was a chubby lad of sturdy limbs. His massive build aged "him somewhat, while giving him, when seated, a certain precocious majesty: but "the moment he stood the ungainly swaying of his body from one leg to the other "destroyed this favourable impression. There was nothing disagreeable about his "round highly coloured visage and arched nose, though his badly set teeth spoilt "his ready smile. His short-sighted eyes had a sweet and sad expression, but the "timidity which prevented him from looking straight into anybody's face would be

"mistaken for slyness. The voice was harsh. Except on great occasions, he dressed "plainly and even untidily, much to the annoyance of his Queen. . . .

"An orphan at an early age, the isolation in which he was kept by a tutor who "dreaded outside influence, made him unsociable. Otherwise he was rather well "instructed, his remarkable memory helping him in the study of history and "geography. When compelled to appear at court he seemed a complete stranger "to it. Ministers, courtiers, above all the King, his grandfather, frightened him, and "if addressed by them he giggled by way of answer. Otherwise there was method "in his ideas and he showed a certain amount of sagacity. After two years of "married life his wife credited him with a decided leaning towards justice, order, "and truth, but she feared the effects of carelessness and lack of nerve, a sort of "impotence of the will, the capital defect of Louis XVI, the cause of his mistakes, "the origin of all his misfortunes.

"This inborn moral weakness was combined, as it happens, with a certain "roughness of manners. Sensible and good-hearted, he would offend people "unwittingly with questionable sallies. As such exertions as riding and hunting "were hardly strong enough for his sanguine constitution, he delighted in sawing "wood, felling trees, forging iron, helping the workmen at Versailles to carry beams "and make cement. These violent recreations gave him an enormous appetite: an "appetite for quantity more than for quality.

"Needless to add he was no lady's man. The society of women made him "uncomfortable and silent. This dread alone might have accounted for his continence, "but he was also truly religious, and the tardy awakening of his nature supported "the practice of strict principles. Louis XV never missed an opportunity of teasing "this young Bourbon of so different a composition. From all accounts the Dauphin "saw in his imminent marriage nothing but hindrances in the way of his outdoor "exercises and his hunting. The diary in which since the age of thirteen he used "to record the salient facts of the eve contains merely the following word on the "morrow of his wedding: 'rien.'

"It would be difficult to imagine a greater contrast than existed between this "Prince and his bride. Two children both: he not yet sixteen, and decidedly "backward: she fourteen and a half and precocious. Only their ages harmonized: "they differed in every other way."

The usual authorities give no particulars about this small plate, except to mention its rarity. Paired at its issue with one reproducing Marie Antoinette's portrait (No. 227), which had arrived at Versailles while her engagement was being negotiated, it reproduced the flattering and courtly likeness of the Dauphin sent in

exchange to Vienna by way of introduction to Empress Maria Theresa and her daughter. It is plausible to suppose that Bonnet engraved it from Vanloo's original in Paris—now at the Burg—and not from a copy, as was the case with the companion print of the prospective bride.[1]

[1] The best and least known portrait of Louis XVI as a young man is in London, painted by a loyal David in his genuine eighteenth-century style: almost as sensational a work of art as might be a picture of the Tsar by a pre-Bolshevik.

CARLE VERNET

332.

LA DANSE DES CHIENS

Engraved by Charles-François-Gabriel Levachez in 1815, printed in colours

First state.

BY enlivening his sixteen views of the chief ports of the kingdom with groups of significant and even dramatic figures, Joseph Vernet, the first of a dynasty of painters, broke away from the purely decorative interest of official themes and revealed the possibilities of seascape.[1] His son, CARLE VERNET (1758-1835), seceded from classical tradition in his first picture, the "Triumph of Paulus Æmylius," a pell-mell of warriors and chariots, by drawing horses whose anatomy he had studied as a sportsman in riding schools and stables, not on the old masters or the Van der Meulen tapestries at Versailles. Discarding the German fullness of conventional equine forms, he introduced in art the British thoroughbred, with its sinewy grace, its prancing spirits, and throbbing nostrils.

For a while the Revolution interrupted a promising career and made of David his enemy, who by saying "how can I apply for favours to Robespierre, I who have "painted Brutus," refused to intervene in favour of Carle's sister, Mme. Chalgrin, sent to the scaffold by the Committee of Public Safety.[2]

When he took up his work again it was as an artist of another era, whose rather formal compositions showed undraped Greek heroes mounted on English, or even Arab, steeds. But the campaigns of the Directoire impelled him to initiate a new military style of pictures, witness two typical battle-pieces: "Bonaparte at Marengo," and "The Morning of Austerlitz," more or less drawn on the spot.

His landscapes and sporting scenes,[3] his set of "Incroyables and Merveilleuses," enjoyed the greatest vogue, principally owing to their interpretation by Debucourt, who in his third manner depended on Carle Vernet as the leading authority on the ridicules and fads of the day. After France had surrendered to the Allies, he published between 1814 and 1818 a selection of costumes with the following comment: "no more favourable time could be chosen since we are indebted to this "flotsam and jetsam for the invasion of a motley crowd whose dress and demeanour

"are the amusement of Paris." Among the new types of "our friend the enemy" launched by him, were the Cossack doing the gallant on the boulevards, the Prussian putting on simpering airs, the puffed up Milord, and the tall, lean, long-toothed Milady. To these racy skits presenting the appearance of popular scenes may be traced the style of caricature prevalent through the early part of the nineteenth century: the "Danse des chiens," with its title inserted also in English on the lettered state, being a favourite specimen. Its interest may be more anecdotical than historic, its colour dull, but the lively mimicry of figures so neatly drawn shows a singular faculty for catching the outward oddities of individuals as well as the characteristic street life of the capital and its suburbs.

Having realized the resources of lithography for purposes of quick propaganda, Carle Vernet was the first to engrave on stone and print therefrom. Over two hundred of his productions in that process may be seen at the Bibliothèque Nationale.

The erection in 1833 of a museum of French military glories at Versailles came at the very moment when Horace Vernet, himself a painter, could link the style of Carle, his father, with that of the romantic school of art which was to prevail under Louis Philippe and the Second Empire.

LEVACHEZ, father and son (17?-18?), print-dealers at the Palais Royal and at Versailles, combined trade with a workshop of engravings, poor copies some of them of fine English plates. At one time they made a speciality of revolutionary subjects and of portraits of members of the National Assembly. Portalis quotes "Dancing dogs" as the last commendable specimen of genuine colour printing derived from the mode of etching on copper known as aquatint, before it succumbed to the commercial competition of cheap illuminated imagery.

Bourcard considers "la Danse des chiens" as the best of Carle Vernet's engraved works, "very pretty, very much sought after." A large number of hand-coloured impressions of it were put in circulation as soon as the first state was disposed of. Gosselin reproduced it in the 'eighties and Grand Carteret inserted a copy of it in the last volume of his "XIXme siècle." The original water-colour belongs to Count de Pourtalès.

[1] While painting a portrait of Louis XV, Latour dared to remark to His Majesty that more attention should be paid to the development of the French Navy: "You seem to forget Joseph Vernet" was the King's good-natured repartee.

[2] Emilie Vernet had married the architect of the Arc de Triomphe.

[3] Mr. A. Christophle, who formed this collection of prints, had a remarkable set of hunting and racing *gouache* drawings by Carle Vernet, the majority of which have been engraved.

FRANÇOIS-ANDRÉ VINCENT

333.

LA SOIRÉE DU PALAIS ROYAL

Engraved by JEAN-GABRIEL CAQUET

Second state.

IN his "Dessins, gouaches, etc.," published in 1893, Bourcard stated he had never seen this print, qualified it as "rarissime," and inserted it under the engraved works of Lavreince; but in 1912, referring to an impression of it clipped on three sides, he wrote: "the composition is by an unknown artist: some ascribe it to "Lavreince, others to F. A. Vincent: we would rather accept the latter attribution." Bocher does not mention it.

Bellier de la Chavignerie, in his "Dictionary of French artists," enters five painters of the name of VINCENT in the second half of the eighteenth century, none of whose works appears to have made a mark. Judging from the plate, the original must have been a combined imitation of Baudouin and Lavreince as a possible companion to "la soirée des Tuileries" (No. 32), the leading actor of which would hardly have countenanced any comparison with the portly courtier approaching two Palais Royal ladies at the foot of the statue of a Satyr.

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